Policy and practice, power and knowledge

Adult basic educators, like most teachers, do not generally see themselves as players in the political arena where policy decisions are made. We more often perceive ourselves as victims of policies that seem to distort the reality of our work and undermine our professional knowledge and judgment.

For many years, it may not have mattered much. Literacy was not high on anyone's policy agenda anyway. In the past two decades, however, literacy in schools and in adult social and workplace sectors has become a lightning rod in industrialized countries where it has been identified as a factor in global competitiveness among knowledge economies. This language of human capital is becoming more familiar though not more comfortable for most practitioners in the field.

The danger is that those with first-hand knowledge about learners and their needs are marginalized by the policy process and then further remove themselves by scorning the process and talking only among themselves.

This dilemma was one of the motivations for the 2004 Summer Institute that we co-sponsored with the Movement for Canadian Literacy. At the time, Canada was in a unique position after the June 2003 Parliamentary Report had called on the federal government to initiate discussions with the provinces and territories to develop a Pan-Canadian policy on adult literacy. Provinces were at diverse stages, from having fully developed policies to having none.

We wanted to learn from policy experiences in other countries. We asked what we know, what we still do not know, whether policies can be or have been crafted to meet the basic learning needs of citizens as well as the political objectives of governments, and how to engage practitioners in policy discussions.

We invited participants from Canada, the US, the UK, Australia, and New Zealand to start the conversations with short papers that outlined the policy experiences with literacy in their own countries.

Different countries, same issues

Not surprisingly, we learned that the issues were similar even if expressed in slightly different language. In a country such as Sweden with a history of commitment to adult learning, there seemed to be no need for an explicit literacy policy. For most developed countries now addressing literacy, the stories that participants told revealed many common underlying principles.

Joseph LoBianco set the tone and offered a running commentary throughout the Institute. Originally founder and CEO of Language Australia, Joe is a professor of language and literacy education at the University of Melbourne. He wrote Australia's first language policy *The National Policy on Languages* (1987). He argued that literacy practitioners and researchers must become "policy literate" in order to understand and participate in the complex process of policy development. He uses the metaphor of "an inter-cultural encounter" to describe the dialogue between policy makers

INSIDE

Lo Bianco on the political-research culture clash

Politicians-bureaucrats believe that a political or democratic compact has given them responsibility for political action. They commission and produce knowledge stocks and representations of the "literacy field" appropriate to the actions that political agency requires. Literacy researchers and many teachers hold that "profess-ionalism" gives them a legitimate claim to intervene in or influence literacy education practices. Their knowledge is generated for teaching, research and "scholarly understanding." The claim to a legitimate role in debate about resources and public policy derives from or is conferred by executive responsibility in one

case, and by professionalism and deep field knowledge in the other.

...while there is ample room for professional conversation and debate, it would be naïve to neglect the considerable underlying differences of perspective and purpose. These are sufficiently stable and recurring to suggest that they are two underlying cultures; one an executive policy-oriented action culture and the other whose focus is professional and intimate. One imagines intermittent and infrequent involvement to correct failure while the other imagines enduring involvement with the field. The intermittent attention

seeks to solve problems decisively and fully, and is oriented towards eradicating "problems"; it generalizes from localized contexts towards identifying points of entry, strategic interventions (often with timeframes shaped by electoral parameters). The other is more attentive to detail, to patient observation, identifying complex relations, localized conditions, exceptions and patterns.

When policy makers call on researchers to collaborate in determining policy processes what results is as much an inter-cultural encounter as it is a political dialogue.

and practitioners, and challenges us to understand the pre-dispositions and motivations we each bring to the table. He suggested that we can only do this through studying the historical connections between knowledge and power and the role played by advising. While a rational or scientific approach to policy-making is still dominant, LoBianco suggests that there is a recent skepticism and some new interest

in the idea of social capital as an alternative frame. This offers a possible space for future dialogue if we make ourselves policy-literate.

This issue of *LACMF* shares some perspectives from the 2004 Institute, as well as other resources, such as an annotated print and web bibliography, that we hope can contribute to increasing policy literacy. We also include a section on community

writing and arts that supports the concept of multiple literacies and paths to reading. A continuing threat of recent literacy policies has been a progressive narrowing of definition and acceptable outcomes. We stand firmly committed to the broadest understanding of literacy for a complex world. [LS]

1 On re-thinking trust and public accountability

When I finished writing [*Autonomy and Trust in Bioethics* (April 2002, Cambridge University Press)], I knew there was a lot more to be said about trust and mistrust. I had come to think that our new culture of accountability, which is promoted as the way to reduce untrust-worthiness and to secure ever more perfect control of insti-tutional and professional performance, was taking us in the wrong direction.

So when the BBC approached me to see what I could offer for the Reith Lectures, I suggested that I could look more broadly at trust and accountability, particularly in the professions and the public sector. In the lectures I argue that having misdiagnosed what ails British society we are now busy prescribing copious draughts of the wrong medicine. We are imposing ever more stringent forms of control. We are requiring those in the public sector and the professions to account in excessive and sometimes irrelevant detail to regulators and inspectors, auditors and examiners. The very demands of accountability often make it harder for them to serve the public sector.

Our revolution in accountability has not reduced attitudes of mistrust, but rather reinforced a culture of suspicion. Instead of working towards intelligent accountability based on good governance, independent inspection and careful reporting, we are galloping towards central planning by performance indicators, reinforced by obsessions with blame and compensation. This is pretty miserable both for those who feel suspicious and for those who are suspected of untrustworthy action – sometimes with little evidence.

In the Reith Lectures I outline a much more practical view of trust. The lectures are not about attitudes of trust, but about actively placing and refusing trust and the sorts of evidence we need if we are to place trust well. Far from suggesting that we should trust blindly, I argue that we should place trust with care and discrimination, and that this means that we need to pay more attention to the accuracy of information provided to the public. Placing trust well can never guarantee immunity from breaches of trust: life does not provide guarantees. There is no total answer to the old question 'Who shall guard the guardians?', and there is no way of eliminating all risk of disappointment. Nevertheless, many of us would agree with Samuel Johnson "it is better to be sometimes cheated than never to have trusted".

If we are to reduce the culture of suspicion, many changes will be needed. We will need to give up childish fantasies that we can have total guarantees of others' performance. We will need to free professionals and the public service to serve the public. We will need to work towards more intelligent forms of accountability. We will need to rethink a media culture in which spreading suspicion has become a routine activity, and to move towards a robust configuration of press freedom that is appropriate to twenty-first century commun-ications technology. This won't be easy. We have placed formidable obstacles in our own path: it is time to start removing them.

Professor Onora O'Neill, Principal, Newnham College, Cambridge
2002 Reith Lectures, BBC Radio
http://www.open2.net/trust/oneill_on_trust/oneill_on_trust1.htm

2 On defining "easy" in "easy-to-read" web health information

In my ten years working in health literacy, I have seen a huge increase in materials on the web … labeled as easy. There are SOME easy-to-read health resources on the web but many of the materials labeled easy-to-read are still far too difficult for most of the general public. As you probably know, the average U.S. [and Canadian] adult reads at about 8th "grade" level. Much of the material on the web that is labeled "easy" or "plain language" is written at much higher levels. (There are inherent problems in using grade levels to label adult readers but this gives you a general idea of the level of functioning vs. the literacy demands of printed materials.)

I recently analyzed the reading level of seven materials on, or linked to, MedlinePlus' "Easy-to-Read" area. The average reading level was 11, and the range was from 8 to 16. The results were similar for the FDA's web site where they offer "easy" resources.

The problem is in defining "easy." What is easy to an average or lower-skilled reader is entirely different from what is easy for those doing the labeling. So I suggest great caution in using materials labeled this way. They may not achieve what you hope for or assume they will.

Plus, keep in mind that there are dozens of factors beyond reading level that affect a document's appropriateness. These include organization, amount of information, whether the information is what the reader is looking for, approach, tone, design, layout, cultural appropriateness, and more. So even if the reading level is at 7th or 8th "grade" level, you cannot automatically assume the piece is going to work for the general public or readers with limited literacy skills.

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Summer Institute 2004

June 28 - 30, 2004

The Institute was a three-day facilitated exchange that brought together adult basic education practitioners from the formal and community sectors, researchers, and policy makers to explore questions, enlarge understanding, and identify strategies to move adult literacy policy and practice forward across local, national and international boundaries.

The articles in this issue are versions of "Think Papers" that we requested from the international presenters. We asked them to write from their personal vantage points of direct or research involvement in adult basic education or literacy policy. Just before the Institute, Australian researcher Joe Lo Bianco suffered a back injury that almost forced him to cancel his visit; because he could not write anything new at the time, he sent a formal academic paper as background reading. At the Institute, he presented a more personal informal version which is summarized below. His full-length academic paper is online on our web site. The Institute was run in partnership with the Movement for Canadian Literacy (MCL)

International perspectives

Joseph Lo Bianco
Language Australia
(languageaustralia.com.au/whoweare/bianco1.htm)

Jay Derrick
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Nayda Veeman, Keith Walker and Angela Ward
University of Saskatchewan

QUESTIONS THAT STARTED THE CONVERSATION

Before participants arrived, we sent out some questions to start the discussion:

- How do the definitions of literacy and the positioning of literacy as an educational or social issue affect policy development? How does literacy policy connect to larger, long-term social transformation?

- Where does literacy fit in the lifelong learning agenda? Does the focus on "lifelong learning" increase or diminish emphasis on literacy? Is an adult literacy policy more effective than an adult education policy that embeds literacy?

- How do literacy or lifelong learning "campaigns" fit with policy? What happens when campaigns in different jurisdictions and organizations send contradictory messages?

- What happens when policies in different departments or jurisdictions clash? (e.g. social benefits and access to learning).

- What promising models of effective policy exist around other social issues at national, provincial/state and local levels? What lessons can we learn? Are any of the stakeholders in these issues potential allies for adult literacy? What are the challenges?

- How are international trends in policy-making set?

- What can we learn from places where new adult education and literacy policies have been implemented?

- What research questions need to be explored, who sets the research agenda, and how should priorities be set?

- How are the impacts of policy evaluated? What counts as evidence? Who decides?

- How can we get practitioners to care about policy and understand how they can influence its development?

Policy literacy: Understanding power, policy and professional knowledge in literacy agendas

by Joseph Lo Bianco
University of Melbourne

[Lo Bianco argued that we have to understand the history of policy-making and advising to be policy-literate. He explained some dilemmas and issues of government and academic literacy research. He outlined the difference between human capital theory that underlies much education policy today, and social capital theory that may be more appropriate. He distinguished between United Nations and OECD approaches to literacy policy, and suggested that evidence has not yet led to action on this issue. Using a framework that highlights the interconnections between power and knowledge, he analysed the role played by advice and advising in policy-making, and traced it from Classical Greece to present-day western culture – and rational, or scientific, policy-making. While he suggested a growing scepticism about policy as science, he conceded the model still dominates western policy. He concluded that literacy practitioners and researchers must become policy literate and reclaim their voices in policy debates. Selected edited excerpts are below. The full paper is on The Centre web site.]

In this paper I argue that policy is itself a kind of literacy that literacy educators and researchers need to participate in, critique and understand the 'policy moment'. The policy process is the main vehicle in democratic societies for determining resource allocation. When the trajectory of government policy is towards overall reductions and a shift towards the private sector, informed kinds of policy activism are needed to minimize negative impacts on disadvantaged communities. An enhanced and critical under-standing of the process, history and dilemmas of the overall practice of public policy-making can help us participate more reflectively and fully in its processes.

Dilemmas and issues

Policy is a distinctive category of activity, located just short of overt and formal politics, and just beyond professional practice. We all know about policy in various ways. We encounter the notorious policy promise in the run-up to elections. We protest against policies we dislike and applaud those we prefer. In our professional lives, and as citizens, we engage in processes and debates that aim to shape and influence policy. However, and especially for language and literacy educators in recent years, we often consider "policy" an almost endless sequence of intrusions into the field of educational practice. This view is tied to recent trends that make learning into a commodity, and to the intrusion of market and human capital theories into most educational practice.

Recent education policy literature from different countries, especially adult education and community based, non-formal settings, highlights more dilemmas and issues than confident engagement with the processes for change that democratic societies make available. Even when policy makers have been positively disposed towards adult literacy education, it is consistently traceable to either International Literacy Year in 1990, or, more powerfully, to the adoption by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in the 1990s of the idea that developed national economies had lost competitiveness in international markets, partly due to literacy deficiencies.

An ideological shift occurred between 1990 and 1996. During International Literacy Year (ILY), adult literacy thinking was still characterized by reformist social ambition. Agendas were influenced by lingering Freirean ideologies, or by second-chance rights thinking, or by ideals about overcoming disparities between developing and rich countries' education. ILY had fleeting and marginal impact. By the time the International Adult Literacy Survey was conducted by the OECD and its Canadian partners, participating countries engaged with substantially more commitment, and mainstream policy attention. Ideas of social transformation were replaced by prevailing ideas about labour market reforms, efficiency, and enhanced global competitiveness.

In recent years many western post-industrial democracies have implemented competitive free-market oriented regimes to deploy resources. This has often involved reductions in direct finance to public education. For many literacy teachers and researchers this has led to 'policy' being identified as code for 'cutback'. 'Policy' is also associated with intrusion into educational practice, via assessment regimes considered overly rigid. National governments increasingly impose more stringent kinds of external accountability for the outcomes of literacy programs. Governments have instituted a kind of contract, in which the elevated importance of literacy within public policy is conditioned by restrictions on the professional judgment and autonomy of teachers.

The increased attention to literacy by developed-country governments is directly associated with a revival of human capital asset thinking within the context of the emergence of the 'knowledge economy' or post-industrialism. This thinking is reinforced by a strong move towards international comparative studies on the relative literacy performance of national economies, especially deriving from the OECD (1992; 1995; 1996; 1997).

POLICY AND PRACTICE

Policy patterns

[He traces patterns in literacy policy among OECD countries to show how different emphases of government and researchers lead to different types of policy advocacy. Current government policies include a focus on human capital effects on the labour market adult literacy 'campaigns' to 'solve' literacy difficulties at the interface of education and the labour market; and a 'vaccination' approach of intense language skills in early years and primary schooling rather than cross-curricular and more socially complex approaches.]

A typical policy addresses attainment levels of learners, defined as "key skills", and seeks indicators of overall and group-specific performance standards in an international comparative framework. It seeks to develop 'techniques' to efficiently monitor skills-based literacy and ways to report test results in publicly accessible ways. The policy advocacy that emerges from such research topics tends to be evaluative commentary on literacy performance as statistically represented, and on measures to 'improve' the results of school-to-school, or country-to-country comparisons. Public ranking of schools or national economies is one manifestation of this. Another key outcome has been partisan promotion of preferred literacy teaching methods.

By contrast, academic literacy research addresses a much wider array of social and educational contexts and is sensitive to variation, context, and social meaning. The policy advocacy that emerges argues for greater attention to the located and culturally variable dimensions of literacy in social practice, and understands literacy as having personal and social meanings over economic ones.

However, there are also many dilemmas involved in scholarly knowledge production regardless of whether or not it has been specifically recruited for a policy purpose. The endurance of the skills-based focus in most government literacy policy discourse, and the construction

BOX 1

Human capital and social capital

Human capital is the theoretical framework that dominates thinking about education in many societies. The OECD defines human capital as: *"The knowledge that individuals acquire during their life and use to produce goods and services or ideas in market and non-market circumstances"*

Austrian economist Fritz Machlup, a key proponent of the idea, offered a more specified definition:
" The connection between knowledge and human capital is easily understood if one realizes that capital is formed by investment, that investment in human resources is designed to increase their capacity (to produce, to earn, to enjoy life etc), and that improvements of capacity, as a rule, result from the acquisition of 'knowing what' and 'knowing how.'' (1984)

Adding the overall value of these knowledge stocks yields a measure of the human capital resources available to a national economy, but to handle the inevitable differences in conceptualization of these measures across national systems requires the use of some proxy measures. Assessed literacy levels serve this function.

The focus on the economic role of knowledge seeks to make 'invisible' capital visible to the gaze of accountants and economists. The emergence of the post-industrial economy (services, high technology products, value-added processes, tourism etc) reinvigorated the notion of human capital which had lain dormant since the 1950s. Alongside moves for unfettered markets for the 'exchange of competence', individuals are seen to operate like mini-economies, investing in their skills and knowledge and 'trading themselves.'

This is a classical economics vision; an interconnected network of rational individuals making cost-benefit calculations of the returns they expect for investment in all areas of their lives; including the languages they speak, the cultures they can competently function in, and the literacies they have available to them.

"Social capital" is a contesting notion that locates individuals within social, cultural and other collectives. Social capital deals with the trust, goodwill and networks of human collectivities, rather than with isolated individuals. Social capital approaches are less well developed than human capital theorizing which is a longstanding branch of economics. The term is increasingly used to express literacy as a phenomenon of human relationships rather than individual's skills. Policies inspired by principles and understandings of social capital would emphasize community-based settings, and networks of relationships and social cohesion in which learning takes place and what is learned is practiced. With its stress on effective and valuable relationships, social capital is an appropriate notion for inclusion in literacy since recent academic work has stressed the culturally variable and located character of literacy. It represents literacy as embedded in contexts of relationships and social values; literacy acts and literacy events that take place within networks of social life.

of recurrent "literacy crises" as a device to sustain wider political agendas create an unavoidable policy-tinged environment for literacy scholarship. Any literacy research or teaching practice undertaken in contexts where there is so much prior framing of the issue makes 'politicization' highly likely. French philosopher Michel Foucault understood that 'policy' (power) and 'information' (knowledge) are mutually shaped and shaping. There is no place to begin that is without history and effects.

Joseph LoBianco grew up as a non-English speaker in a farming community in rural Australia, and has lived in Italy, Sri Lanka, Scotland, the US, SE Asia and the Pacific Islands, and other places. He has training in applied linguistics, economics, sociology and political science, and teaching. He was founder and Chief Executive Officer of Language Australia, and is a professor of language and literacy education at the University of Melbourne. He is the author of Australia's first language policy The National Policy on Languages (1987), served on the Australian National Commission for UNESCO for 10 years, and has consulted worldwide on language and literacy planning.

BOX 2

International contexts of literacy advocacy

The United Nations, through its specialized agencies of UNICEF and UNESCO, has used a human rights orientation in their elaboration of literacy policies. For decades they have issued declarations, aims, goals, objectives, calls to action and other instruments of persuasion and mobilization in relation to literacy problems in poor and developing countries. These 'calls to action' usually aim to 'eradicate illiteracy' and achieve the 'universalization of primary education' and suggest action at all levels of formal, non-formal and adult education. The discourse usually refers to indigenous or local languages, to local scripts or writing systems, to the special needs and problems of females, of remote or marginalized populations, to nomadic peoples. This approach takes a 'development and human rights' perspective and identifies literacy with enhancement of communities, their quality of life, improvements in health and opportunity.

In recent years, the global literacy agenda however has been set by international organizations concerned with relative international competitiveness of rich countries with post-industrial knowledge-based economies. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) whose members are the world's most economically advanced democracies has been especially prominent; in their calculations 'relative literacy levels' have been established as part of a discourse of human capital and economic competitiveness.

OECD studies are policy-oriented research in that they are commissioned by the OECD member states to guide their national decision-making. This research requires substantial decontextualization of literacy practices and literacy-tasks within an ideology that considers adult literacy problems as a kind of social threat. The sophisticated data sets produced by the OECD have stimulated calls for ever increasing comparisons, greater statistical refinement, and further evidence of comparative literacy problems in industrialized countries. Having more data, especially comparable international data reinforces the likelihood that discussions of what constitutes literacy, and 'acceptable literacy performance', will be debated within an established model of description of tasks accomplished in measurable, discrete and recurring ways and a vocabulary for comparing such results across cultural-national settings. One influential instance of this work is the 1995 IALS.

Does evidence lead to action?
Despite this commitment to statistical constructions of information about literacy there is little direct correspondence between empirical demonstrations of literacy need and any kind of public policy response. Any such correspondence would presuppose a direct or rational connection between the generation of knowledge and resulting policy action. The history of evidence about literacy problems (adult or child, male or female, developed-country to developing) and the connection of demonstrations of need with policies of provision do not support such confidence. The clearest indications of this have been the regular (largely unheeded) calls by UNESCO for global mobilization to 'eradicate' identified disparities in national literacy levels within particular timeframes. With sad frequency since the 1940s, UNESCO has 'called' on national governments (its constituents) to deploy resources to school all girls, to make primary education universally available, to teach adults etc by various nominated dates. All calls have passed without producing the hoped-for 'mobilizations'.

The relationship between evidence and action is mediated by many intervening factors, social values. Policy does not emerge unproblematically from the demonstration of need. All new information is absorbed within power configurations that combine prevailing ideologies, existing knowledge and the various interests of those involved. One person's problem is often another person's non-issue.

POLICY AND PRACTICE

Evidence-based policy-making and assessment in adult literacy, numeracy and language (ESOL)

by Jay Derrick, NRDC (National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (UK))

Context

My contribution to this Institute builds on my previous work on policy and its impact on adult literacy and basic education (Derrick 2002a, 2002b, 2004). These earlier papers suggest that research should pay more attention to the 'systems' aspects of adult basic education provision (e.g. funding regimes, assessment systems, performance management systems, professional certification standards, teachers' pay and conditions of service) as these may well be as significant for learners as pedagogy or curriculum considerations. A recent paper "Making the Grade" looks at some of the more obvious problems produced by the current system in England and Wales that uses payment and evaluation by results.

This "think-piece" suggests ways of understanding why, despite the problems it causes, this approach is perversely popular with policy-makers; it also introduces for discussion and debate some principles for a new assessment paradigm.

Standardized testing: Origins

Standardized testing to assess learning was developed by the IQ theorists of the early and mid-twentieth century who aimed to establish a scientific methodology to assess ability and capacity. Their work was based on the belief that standardized tests assessed qualities inherent to individuals and that these could be measured in terms of single numbers and ranked (Gould 1996). From their perspective it was crucial to minimize the effects of 'subjective' judgments and reliance on qualitative evidence. Part of the radicalism of this approach was that it strove to eliminate the judgments of professionals seen as unscientific and biased. This methodological approach, which has been enormously influential on popular ideas about education and training in the Anglo-Saxon countries, sees itself as neutral, scientific, and objective. It is compatible with a view of knowledge and capacity as relatively simple and static qualities of individuals.

Although the social and racial theories associated with the IQ theorists are now largely unfashionable, their metho-dological tools and approaches are still with us. More recent theories of learning have replaced them with social, multiple, developmental and dynamic models. They have, however, failed to develop new approaches to the assessment of capacity and learning which are compatible with a view of literacy, numeracy and language as dynamic and complex processes of social interaction between individuals within multiple communities of practice. Compatible measures of capacity and learning achievements in this model would be provisional, at best indicative, with professional judgment at its heart.

In England and Wales until ten years ago, national achievement data on adult literacy, numeracy and language were virtually non-existent. Adult education, of which it was a part, was more or less marginal in the minds of policy-makers, entirely provided through local authorities, universities and voluntary organizations and free of almost any national regulatory framework (Fieldhouse 1996). However, as part of the new vocationalism during the 1980s, adult literacy, numeracy and language training in particular began to be seen by policy-makers as playing a significant role in terms of economic prosperity (Hamilton 1996). In the early 1990s, it was incorporated into the further education framework of national funding, qualifications and performance measurement. There, it became subject to the perspective of human capital theory which measures education outcomes in terms of qualifications gained by individuals within a national qualifications framework.

Following the Moser report (1999) and the launch of the national strategy for England and Wales, all literacy, numeracy and language work is now funded on the basis that it leads towards new national standardized multiple-choice tests (Derrick 2004). There are high-stakes national achievement targets for adult literacy, numeracy and language, divided among the regions; only passes in these tests count, even though the Moser Report recommendations specifically excluded such a restrictive approach (Lavender 2004). These regulatory developments appear to ignore many years of international theoretical and policy work on adult learning, on literacy, numeracy and language as social practices, on organizational development, and on complexity and risk theory. Instead they demand the kind of achievement data that can be incorporated directly into existing linear models of workforce development planning. Not only are the assumptions and methodological tools of the IQ theorists still with us, but they have been given a new lease on life in England and Wales in the twenty-first century.

Evidence-based quality assurance and policy-making: Complex systems and the problem of trust

These UK developments are part of a wider phenomenon which involves an explicit commitment by politicians to evidence-based policy-making. No one would argue against the objective of basing policy on evidence rather than on prejudice or whimsy. However, it is reasonable to ask what kinds of evidence are meant. The phrase seems to imply that when enough well-focussed "hard data" are collected and analyzed, policy decisions can be made tidily on the basis of certainty. However laudable this ideal might be, risk society analysis suggests that even "hard data" are likely to be unreliable in a world of increasing uncertainty, unpredictability, and continual change (Beck 1992).

In spite of this, the most common response to uncertainty and risk among policy-makers and civil servants has been to collect even more hard data, i.e. numbers. Philosopher Onora O'Neill (2002), principal at Newsham College, Cambridge, suggests that this tendency in policy-making, combined with an approach to evidence-gathering which values numerical data over professional judgment, is a sign of a fundamental lack of trust in society, and that policies based on this approach materially contribute to further diminution of trust and social capital. She calls for an

approach to policy- and decision-making in which trust rather than mistrust of professionals is the norm, and for a renewed model of professional practice based on openness, integrity, accountability and awareness of the limits of certainty. [See To Ponder p.3] In this proposed model, numerical data based on standardized instruments would be used alongside other kinds of evidence, including stakeholder value judgments, qualitative accounts, and appropriate expert and professional judgments. This system would value multiple perspectives and more accurately reflect the nature of the processes being evaluated. It would produce more meaningful results because they would be recognized as indicative and provisional, the product of the best knowledge and expertise available, rather than pretend to an unrealizable and misleading degree of certainty.

Paul Skidmore, member of Demos, a UK think tank on everyday democracy, has also addressed this issue. He suggests that:

> Preserving the myth that judgments of educational attainment have some kind of external, scientifically verified status as objective truth is unsustainable. While so many stakeholders continue to look for ways of shoring up this misperception, the system is unlikely to fulfil its full potential. In reality, giving up

on the search for 'the answer' that will fix the system's problems is likely to be the first step towards a more sustainable approach to measuring educational standards.... (2003)

Skidmore argues that a 'complex systems' approach to reform of educational assessment is now urgent. [See BOX 1]

A new assessment paradigm

As a starting point for a complex systems approach, policy-makers will have to accept a set of contemporary principles for educational assessment. These would avoid many of the practical problems produced by the current system, take account of the implications of complexity, risk and uncertainty, contribute to building trust, add value to rather than detract from professional expertise, and produce more accurate and useful information. I now tentatively offer discussion and debate what those principles might include. [See BOX 2, p. 10]

In a system governed by these principles, we might expect to see a number of new features. These would include more assessment carried out by teachers, a wider range of assessment methods and tools, including descriptive, narrative and qualitative discourses as well as quantitative and numerical data, the development of self-assessment skills in the adult learner curriculum, assessment against criteria that reflect wider, non-educational benefits of learning, and assessment work recognized as integral to and embedded in learning. Such a system would broaden the range of benefits gained by learners, contribute to building and maintaining the professional expertise of teachers, and be more likely to raise and maintain standards of achievement.

The task is to convince policy-makers, in particular treasury economists, that outcomes as

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BOX 1

Dangers of traditional approaches to education reform

As the demands on a long-established system proliferate, traditional approaches to reform produce:

- Unintended consequences (e.g. narrowed curriculum focus, teaching to the test, gaming)
- High profile interventions from policy-makers aiming to 'fix' specific problems
- Short-term fixes that increase the fragility of the system and produce further unintended consequences
- Diminution of trust, increase of public cynicism

Source: Skidmore 2003, Chapman 2004

measured by such a changed system would be more reliable and useful than the bleakly impoverished and misleading data sets produced through standardized testing alone.

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BOX 2

Principles for a new model of adult literacy assessment

- Literacy, numeracy and language practices are recognized as multiple, complex and dynamic, and as manifested in social relations between individuals rather than as uni-dimensional qualities inherent in individuals

- Learners are recognized as the most important stakeholders in assessment processes

- Assessment for learning and of learners is detached from assessment for accountability and performance evaluation of institutions

- Emphasis is placed on formative assessment, and reflected in professional development

- Tools are developed for group assessment

- The use of multiple and varied assessment methods is required

- The use of moderation and triangulation between assessment methods is required

- Moderation of assessment is formally structured as collaborative professional development and reflective practice. A range of contingent evidence bases for improvements in literacy, numeracy and language are developed: The 'wider benefits of learning' (Schuller et al 2004) are recognized and evaluated

- Systems for assessment of learning are explicitly based on trust, professional judgments, and the recognition of the provisional nature of assessment.

Source: Jay Derrick, June 2004

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The impact of policy on adult literacy practice:
Lessons from New Zealand

Workbase
The National Centre for Workplace Literacy & Language

by Katherine Percy
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Introduction

In this think piece I consider how policy has affected the development of adult literacy practice in New Zealand.

My perspective comes from Workbase, an organization that focuses on workplace literacy and the development of the adult literacy sector in New Zealand. Adult literacy policy and practice expertise are important to us, particularly in relation to the provision of literacy development support for employed people.

My perspective is also that of a Chief Executive, with neither a policy nor practitioner background, although these are critical activities in our organization. I have a change management and business perspective as Workbase relies on selling literacy programs to private companies and selling sector development projects to a new Government agency that is not in control of the policy agenda.

With this in mind I'd like to give some background – to identify what is distinctive about addressing adult literacy in New Zealand – as compared to other nations. I'll talk about how these features have affected the development of adult literacy policy and the sector.

What NZ has in common with other countries re: adult literacy

The types of issues we are trying to address:

- How adult education and literacy policy relate to other social and economic policy developments and implementation
- How adult literacy is linked to other adult education initiatives

- The tensions produced between accountability and funding mechanisms that drive behaviour in a different direction from intended policy outcomes
- Responsiveness of policy to stakeholder needs and priorities – including that of learners
- A lack of research and evidence about approaches and effectiveness – and identifying what should count as evidence for what purposes, what areas of research and evaluation are most important - and how we would collect and analyse information and disseminate it.

- How to preserve the language and culture of first nation or indigenous people and support English literacy development for tangata whenua (people of the land)
- How to address needs of multi-lingual, multi-ethnic learner groups

What distinguishes New Zealand from other countries

- **Size**: A small country with a geographically dispersed population of four million

- **Challenges**
  - Only a small group of people available to undertake the development work required
  - Impossible to support the number of experts on specialist topics as in a larger nation
  - Tend to be generalists – in academia, government, and adult education
  - Government officials' and analysts' portfolios tend to be broad and people move around between government departments – difficult to institutionalize subject area knowledge

POLICY AND PRACTICE

• **Opportunities**
- Relatively easy access to senior officials and politicians
- Participants involved in influencing, developing and implementing policy often know each other

• **Political structure**
- Three-year political cycle
- Fickle electorate
- Two major political parties that struggle to differentiate their policies

• **Socio-Economic**
- Export-dependant economy
- Aging workforce – 60 % will still be working in 2020
- Fourth lowest unemployment rate in the OECD – 4.3%
- Skill shortages increasingly being identified as holding back company growth
- IALS (1996) 40% of employed people scored below level 3
- Increasingly non-english speaking background immigration
- Recent survey confirmed a national identity that values egalitarianism, fairness and quality of life.

NZ adult literacy policy and practice devlopment IALS

The IALS results were a surprise. New Zealand has an international reputation as a leader in school-level literacy teaching – in relation to the work of Marie Clay and whole language approaches. However, our history in adult literacy is much more recent. Adult literacy has traditionally been undertaken by part-time volunteers in small community schemes. We have no universities or teacher training institutions that specialise in training or research in adult education, adult literacy or workplace literacy. There has been very little formal professional development for adult literacy practitioners.

The previous lack of funding for the adult literacy sector meant that there was minimal infrastructure, systems or processes in place around quality assurance, measuring literacy skill gains and the professionalism of practitioners working in the field. Literacy outcomes were often reported in relation to numbers participating, contact hours and social justice outcomes rather than literacy gains

[In 2001] Literacy was defined as "a complex web of reading, writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, creative thinking and numeracy skills".

achieved by learners. In New Zealand, IALS is seen as important for its contribution to moving away from the literate/illiterate dichotomy.

Adult Literacy Strategy 2001

In 2001, the Government adopted an Adult Literacy Strategy and a definition of literacy, and for the first time allocated funding to develop the adult literacy sector. These initiatives were well received among academics, practitioners and providers of adult education.

The broad goal of the Adult Literacy Strategy was that:

> "over the long term New Zealanders should enjoy a level of literacy which enables them to participate fully in all aspects of life, including work, family and the community and to have the opportunity to achieve literacy in English and Te Reo Maori".

Literacy was defined as "a complex web of reading, writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, creative thinking and numeracy skills".

The Adult Literacy Strategy intended to develop qualifications for adult literacy practitioners, a quality standard for provider organizations, a process to track and document learning outcomes, and a commitment to increase learning opportunities. The Government did not dedicate many resources to co-ordinate or lead the work, but working groups from the adult literacy sector started a range of infrastructure projects.

The funding accountability framework, however, remained largely unchanged although the amount of money available to support participation in learning increased. The increases went to pre-employment initiatives for young unemployed people; people who were seeking work but faced barriers; and establishing modern apprenticeships that were not associated with literacy support.

The key elements of the framework remained:

• Tertiary funding to providers based on annual enrolments
• Requirements for industry training funding to achieve unit standards on the National Qualification Framework - which have very few, if any, explicit literacy or numeracy elements. These tend to be taught by content experts who rarely have any training to address adult literacy. Indeed, this area of training has become adept at getting around the literacy demands of course work and workplace contexts through approaches such as verbal assessment.

- Pre-employment training where the measured outcomes are employment or further training placement (although supporting literacy was also an expectation)
- Investment in 'modern apprenticeships' that assumed the people involved would not need literacy skill development

The infrastructure project work was not completed within the expected timeframe. The Adult Literacy Strategy and its definition looked great because it represented a huge and welcome advance over the absence of government acknowledgment of the issues; however, it was not accompanied by a policy or implementation plan, or linked to dedicated and sustained governmental engagement, funding or evaluation necessary for effective implementation and change.

Tertiary Education Strategy 2003

In 2003 the Government released a new Tertiary Education Strategy and a Statement of Tertiary Education Priorities that identified "Foundation Skills" as a priority area. No formal definition of Foundation Skills was released, and it is therefore understood in a variety of ways including:

- as an alternative to what was formerly known as literacy and the Adult Literacy Strategy;
- as covering the two lowest levels of the National Qualifications Framework;
- as industry-related education at these levels;
- and as the pre-employment programs for youth and other unemployed people.

Defining foundation skills as everything delivered at low levels on the Framework, without

making literacy an explicit part of the content, implies that widespread literacy provision is occurring when it is not.

When the tertiary education system was restructured, responsibility for operational activities shifted from the Ministry of Education, which continues to develop strategic policy, to the newer Tertiary Education Commission which is charged with operational policy. This shift caused a loss of institutional knowledge of the adult literacy and workplace literacy sector – and knowledge of the Adult Literacy Strategy and the work that had led up to and followed it. Funding for professional development, resources for practitioners and research projects hit a pause.

DeSeCo

More recently, the Ministry of Education, in their strategic policy role, started looking at the OECD's DeSeCo work (Definition and Selection of Competencies: Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations)[1] as the basis to develop a framework for key competencies across tertiary education.

This work can be seen as a belated approach to implementation of the Adult Literacy Strategy and/or the Foundation Skills Strategy. It is conceptually consistent with the IALS framing of literacy as a continuum. The DeSeCo provides a meaningful way to think about literacy in relation to a fast changing knowledge society and lifelong learning. [See www.portalstat.admin.ch /deseco/news.htm]

However, as Ministry of Education officials consider the implications of the DeSeCo key competencies for teaching and assessment, they are also starting to look at some progress that has belatedly begun to emerge from the Adult Literacy infrastructure development projects.

Policy and practice at cross purposes

Although some development work of an adult literacy infrastructure is still underway, the qualification for practitioners, the quality standard for providers, and the achievement framework for learners have not been completed. Recently, the lack of an implementation plan and the policy hiatus have been demonstrated in a decline of funding for professional development. There has been little increase in provider capability or capacity in adult literacy.

Development has been significantly inhibited by the absence of a link between the Adult Literacy Strategy, which supported an integrated literacy approach, and the criteria used to fund and monitor programs. The funding and accountability mechanisms have emphasised increased participation and attainment of low-level qualifications, but not literacy learning outcomes.

From the Government's perspective, funding and accountability requirements are the most direct mechanisms for driving adult literacy provider behaviour but they can also inhibit capacity development. They are not sufficient in themselves to build desired capacity or programme quality but – to the extent that they work at cross purposes with these goals - the goals will not be achieved.

In New Zealand as the rhetoric associated with adult literacy has been used more widely the number of providers who claim to be addressing adult literacy has increased. This has occurred particularly in pre-employment training where few practitioners have teaching qualifications or access to professional development. The Government's Tertiary Education agency "talked up" the expectation of growth in literacy capability but has not funded or measured this.

The scene in 2004

Currently the Ministry of Education is developing standards and progressions for literacy and numeracy, recognizing that definitions and outcome measures have to be a basis for accountability and funding. There are questions about the capability of many providers to understand and implement meaningful measures of literacy achievement. Attention is slowly turning to providers' and practitioners' perceptions of their own needs and priorities and to the effectiveness of different approaches to professional development. No capacity building will succeed until there is a degree of match between the pressures faced by those working in the adult literacy sector and the objectives stated in Government strategy.

Funding for providers of adult and workplace literacy support is still dependant on annual subsidy pools. This funding uncertainty is a significant disincentive to providers to invest in new types of programs and expertise. In spite of the Government acknowledgement of the need for literacy develop-ment, the market demand for workplace literacy provision remains low. The costs of developing expertise and delivering literacy support are high. At this juncture, providers of adult and workplace education have little to gain financially from developing expertise in this area. Almost no providers are willing to invest in developing workplace literacy service provision – as the returns on such investment are so uncertain.

With the quality standard for providers nearly completed, there are concerns about whether there will be support and funding for implementation. Practitioners will require career paths and employment opportunities to motivate them to become more qualified. Even with increased capability of providers, evidence of outcomes will be needed to encourage employers and learners to invest time, energy and resources in literacy programs.

Lessons learned

Despite a far-sighted strategy, a lot of optimism and hard work, and what the Government considers significant increases in funding for participation in tertiary education, we have not achieved great gains for adult literacy provision or learning. We do not expect the results from New Zealand's participation in the next International Adult Literacy and Life Skills survey will be any better than in 1996.

To summarize, what we have are strategies rather than policies. With the benefit of hindsight we needed both strategic and operational policies. We needed an implementation plan that was responsive to the capacity and capability of all parts of the sector and that engaged the sector in developing a robust infrastructure to achieve the outcomes of the strategy.

Building capacity and developing the sector cannot just be left to the market. Government has an important role in steering development and in funding evaluation and research that will inform effective practice and ensure outcomes. Funding and accountability mechanisms need to be aligned. At present the sector cannot change without significant support.

Despite New Zealand's small size, in the absence of a policy and implementation plan, it has proved remarkably difficult to get co-ordination among government department or between the government and the parts of the system that need to be involved. We are now struggling to make the links between newly emerging policy and the infrastructure development initiated three years ago - to the increasing frustration of those who have committed their time for three years. We are at some risk that much of this effort will be wasted as it is made obsolete by the thinking and frameworks that should have informed the strategy at the outset.

This may be the lesson New Zealand can offer – that it is crucial to take planning and research seriously in designing the implementation of a strategy. This needs to be informed by empirical knowledge of the needs and priorities of the sector. We will only achieve the desired change if the goals are feasible to the providers and the tutors on the ground.

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Thinking pragmatically about the impact of policy on practice
Adult Basic Education – A U.S. perspective

by Sondra Stein
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Credential Project

This morning, the headlines of the Washington Post are two inches high: "Ronald Reagan Dies," and underneath, in slightly smaller print: "40th President Reshaped American Politics."

I had planned to begin writing this "think piece" this morning. How ironic, I thought. What better way to frame this piece than with Ronald Reagan, whose domestic policies marked the end of the long stretch of social welfare policies launched by FDR and carried on through the 1960's War on Poverty? These policies were based on the assumption that the role of the federal government was to assure equal access and equal opportunity to "health, happiness, and the American dream."

Reagan introduced a very different approach to domestic policy that continues to shape options proposed by the current Executive branch and the Congress. The Reagan focus was ostensibly on economic policy: Cut taxes, rein in domestic spending. The mantra was: Too much government is a bad thing so let's reduce the influence and role of government in the everyday life of American citizens. Biographies of the chief architects of the period now tell us that the real goal of the economic policies was to end the great entitlement programs by running up huge budget deficits. This approach has been perfected by the current Bush administration, whose policies I recently heard described rather aptly by George Soros, as based on social Darwinism: If you can't pull yourself up by your own bootstraps, you don't deserve a helping hand.

In the U.S., this is the environment in which we have been struggling to shape a literacy policy that does offer a helping hand to adults who did not get the education they needed the first time around. There may have been any number of reasons including, for those raised in this country, segregated schools and learning disabilities, and for immigrants, unavailable, inadequate or just non-English schooling in their home country.

In this piece I'd like use my own experience in trying to shape and implement literacy policies at the state and national level over the past twenty years and pose some key issues for how we move forward.

It all started with Reagan

When Reagan became President I was the Director of a community-based education program for women in Roxbury, MA, called WEAVE (Women's Educational and Vocational Enrichment). WEAVE was part of a well-regarded residential drug and alcohol treatment program for women and their children in the community; it was started to help women from the program and the broader community move toward economic self-sufficiency.

We were a demonstration program funded through the Community Service Agency (CSA), a direct descendant of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), which was the primary vehicle for President Johnson's War on Poverty. Johnson had established the OEO (initially run by Sargent Shriver, JFK's brother-in-law) outside the jurisdiction of any existing department so he could exert direct control over these programs intended to overcome racial and economic discrimination.   This made it easy for Reagan, within his first 100 days, to abolish the CSA, clearly signaling his administration's movement away from programs intended to expand access and opportunity. Anticipating this move,

our federal program officer (like all the other CSA employees), simply forward-funded our projects, giving us another eighteen months of funding so we would not go out of business.

A personal odyssey

This was my first – but certainly not last – experience with what happens to programs during transitions from one administration to another. I learned then (and again, six years later with the change in governors of Massachusetts) that the quality of a program doesn't matter if it is identified with a prior administration. This is especially true if the political leader wants to stake out this territory as his own. In the current administration, for example, we have a President who has made the goal of every child reading at grade level by 3rd grade his signature domestic policy. While the Reading Excellence Act put in place at the end of the Clinton administration proposed a very sound approach to improving K-3 reading, it was labeled not sufficiently "research-based" and dismissed for not producing results in its first year. It was replaced with a "new" Bush program, Reading First, which I am told is essentially the same program under a different name.

The decision to do away with the CSA sent me out into the real world of adult education policy, where I discovered that Massachusetts' version of the federal adult education program allotted programs an average of $118/per student/per year. My program was a full time 16-week program, with full time staff, and it cost about $575 per student per 16-week course. It was clear that the definition of effective literacy services used in the federal/state program did not match our definition of student-centered, community-based, holistic services that took students seriously and took seriously our responsibility to help them move successfully to the next step on their chosen path to self-sufficiency.

I worked hard to find other more suitable sources of funding for our program [through Boston's Adult Literacy Initiative (1983) and through a range of welfare-to-work demonstration

programs (1981-83)] but I was also determined to do something about the inappropriateness of the "model" of adult literacy services behind the inadequate funding available through the AEA. I joined other Boston adult literacy programs in creating an advocacy network for literacy, and eventually decided to move from direct service to state administration, to see if I could make a difference in the kind of policies we had – to see if it was possible to develop literacy policy that was supportive of good practice.

I worked for eight years at the state level. For two years I coordinated the link between literacy and employment services through the state's employment and training system, and for six years, I helped lead the Governor's literacy initiative. When the next election brought a governor of the other party, and the governor's initiative was abolished, I moved to Washington, and worked for twelve years through the Association for Community-Based Education (ACBE), the National Governors Association (NGA) and the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) to help shape state and national literacy policy.

I have learned over these past twenty years that politicians (regardless of party or philosophy) are basically pragmatic. They make decisions they perceive as likely to get them re-elected. This means, in general, that:

- Most policymakers are not interested in policies that take longer to bear fruit than one term in office. They want results to help them get re-elected.
- Most policymakers are not interested in programs intended to expand the electorate unless they have a good reason to believe those new voters will vote for them/ their party.
- It does not matter how good a policy/program is. It will be targeted for destruction in a change of administration if it is identified as a signature program of the previous administration. There is no advantage to advertising something that the other guy did right.
- Finally, since pragmatic politics is such an important determinant of policy, there are always political

ways to impact the policy-making process.

In countries where political parties operate more out of an ideological tradition than they do in the U.S., the pragmatic approach may not hold quite as much sway. But in the U.S. when we think about policy, we must take these factors into account. For me that means that the best approach to policy development and implementation is both top-down and bottom-up: rhetorically-based in and responsive to key goals of national and regional policymakers. At the same time, it means being based on the best available research, and driven by and tested against on-the-ground needs of literacy practitioners and literacy students. In other words, it needs to be purposeful and results-oriented, research-based and contextual, and transparent to policymakers, practitioners, everyday citizens and literacy students.

Some key learnings:

• Literacy initiatives must be framed in terms of the key drivers for policy

While individual politicians may be sympathetic to a 1960's access to opportunity approach, only literacy initiatives that are framed in terms of broader social and economic goals will win support as policies. In the 1980's two issues were powerful drivers of literacy policy: Immigration, and the need for a skilled and flexible workforce.

In the 1990's, with school reform on the agenda, the key drivers were:
- Family literacy (with an emphasis on improving parents' abilities to help their children succeed in school)
- Welfare-to-work transitions
- Accountability and standards-based reform.

In the first decade of the 21st century we are in a back-to-basics mode. In the U.S., evidence-based practice in reading and math are the primary avenues for literacy policy in the education arena, but there are other drivers that enable us to keep a broader focus on the issues, that are important to adult learners lives.

Framing literacy policy in terms that are important to the broader policy agenda means there is a chance that someone will pay attention to your issue. There is also the risk that you will lose control of the issue, that it will be defined in a way that does not really meet the needs of adults seeking literacy services.

The only way to steer clear of this risk is to do a lot of preparation beforehand. First get as clear as you can about what your ideal policy vision is. Then identify as completely as you can not only the explicit but the underlying drivers of the dominant policy agenda. Finally, think about how you can translate your vision into terms that are acceptable in the dominant policy arena. I offer two examples [See BOXES 1 & 2].

BOX 1

Governor's Literacy Initiative (CLC) in Massachusetts 1980's

For the governor, there were two key parts of the initiative, engaging Massachusetts' businesses through our workplace education initiative and involving a lot of citizens in a governor's literacy corps. In other words, the governor wanted to very visibly take on the issue of literacy, and get a lot of people doing good and feeling good about doing good. As long as we delivered on what he wanted, he really did not care how we did it. For us, however, there were clear programmatic issues that were important. We wanted to use both initiatives to try to improve access to high quality services.

We began the Literacy Corp project by engaging literacy providers to respond to a survey of what they would need in order to use volunteers to enhance capacity to offer quality literacy services. We then designed both a systems and program RFP which targeted resources to the areas identified by providers. The systems RFP enabled us to establish an infrastructure for a regionally-based statewide training system which several years later became the foundation for the state's professional development system.

BOX 2

Equipped for the Future Initiative at the National Institute for Literacy

The second example comes from my experience developing and leading the Equipped for the Future Initiative at the National Institute for Literacy. Since the starting place for EFF was the national education goal adopted by the President, the Governors, and the Congress, we had a natural link to national policy goals. In building a framework for standards so the field could be held accountable for achieving those goals, we added two essential ingredients. The first was a survey of adult learners in which they told us how adult literacy programs helped them meet their goals as parents, citizens, and workers. The second was a consensus "vision" built by participants in 10 pilot projects in the first year of EFF-funding that provided a blueprint for development, keeping us on track of what was most important for the field: shifting the focus of the adult education system from de-contextualized instruction in academic skills to purposeful, contextualized instruction in the full range of knowledge and skills adults need to accomplish their goals and purposes.

While we adhered to this vision over the 10-year development period, along the way we had to respond to changes in policy focus at the national level. Foreseeing the increased emphasis on research-based practices, in 2000 we began to produce publications that made our research base explicit. Responding to the narrowing of the agenda to a focus on reading we used the EFF Reading standard as the basis for our Assessment Prototype. We also partnered with another organization (the National Center for Family Literacy) to develop the first research-based training curriculum in reading for adult education. At the same time, we took the advice of our National Policy Group and partnered with state workforce departments to develop a Work Readiness Credential based on EFF Standards.

Because policymakers are on a short timeline, you can build infrastructure at the same time as you define clear goals that can be achieved in no more than two years.

- While we were building the Massachusetts volunteer infrastructure, we also tabulated hours of volunteer service, collecting and publishing success stories, and held highly publicized annual events where political leaders were able to thank all the volunteers for their service.

- While we were building the Equipped for the Future standards, we had twenty-five field sites in fifteen states so we had grounded evidence to show that using these standards improved the quality of literacy instruction and improved learner persistence and real world results by engaging learners.

Elected officials (and even appointed officials) are very responsive to calls, mail, and invitations from their constituents

Having a bottom-up, grassroots approach to policy development means that not only are you likely to produce better policy, but you can produce results on the ground, while building a strong constituency for advocacy.

CLC Volunteers became a ready-made citizen's army in advocating for more resources for adult literacy. Similarly, EFF students became strong advocates for any number of efforts to improve the lives of their communities – changing the way people on welfare got their cheques, getting more welfare resources targeted for education, getting resources for eyeglasses and hearing aids for students.

When there's a change in administration you need a strategy in place to take the policy underground or keep it going at a local level

Sometimes calling what you are doing something else is enough. Sometimes you have to shift the focus to just one aspect. And sometimes the only thing is to "go local." Another of many advantages to top-down/bottom-up policy development strategies is that if you establish a strong local base organized for long term survival and

prepared to advocate when necessary, good practices can overcome bad policies or at the very least outlive them. Over the past two years, more and more scientists (including twenty-two Nobel-award winning scientists) and social scientists have joined the call for more scientific integrity in policymaking in the U.S. It has become clear that the administration uses the demand for evidence-based research (as if there was any other kind!) as a politically acceptable justification for discontinuing or not adopting programs they do not support. In the field of education this justification has been used mainly to discount a wide range of holistic approaches to instruction in favour of direct instruction strategies that give teachers very little latitude. In the field of science, this justification has been used to deny the existence of global warming, and more recently, to avoid putting into place stricter standards for pollution from animal waste at factory farms. Under these circumstances, in the face of political motivations, the best strategy is a low profile.

Concluding thoughts

The issue of political transitions is on all of our minds right now in the U.S. Several of our national literacy organizations have joined with VALUE, the student organization, to launch Literacy President (litpresident.org), a multifaceted campaign to raise the priority of literacy. This campaign has two aims: to encourage more students to define and vote in their own self-interest and to raise the stakes enough that both presidential campaigns feel compelled to become informed about adult literacy. Once the election is over, we'll be back to the job of finding a way to frame adult literacy so that it is not only integrated in the domestic policy agenda but integrated in a way that enables us to promote effective, learner-centered practice.

I look forward to discussing these issues at the Institute.

Sondra Stein has worked at the juncture of adult literacy/workforce development practice and policy at the local, state, and national levels. She served as Senior Research Associate and National Director of the Equipped for the Future Initiative at the National Institute for Literacy (NIfL) for twelve years.

The impact of policy on adult literacy in Sweden and Canada

by Nayda Veeman, Keith Walker and Angela Ward
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Adult education is a like a train. You can get on and off when you want. But trains need to run on a track and have a schedule. (L. Johannesson, Göteborg, June 6, 2003)

In the context of globalization, and a general linking of skills to competitiveness, it is not surprising that governments are interested in comparing adult literacy skill levels among countries. The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS, 1995) was the first cross-cultural, multi-language documentation of literacy skills in industrialized societies. Canadian literacy advocates took note that adult literacy levels in Sweden were significantly higher than those of Canada (Sloat & Willms, 2000). More significant was the observation that Swedish literacy levels were less dependent than Canadian on socioeconomic status or level of educational attainment. However, as Husén (1999) noted "policymakers, planners, and administrators want generalizations and rules which apply... to a whole system... [such as the IALS data but] teaching and learning happens at the individual level" (p. 37).

This paper presents the findings of a qualitative applied policy study in Canada and Sweden. Our goal was to account for reported differences in adult literacy levels in the two countries by comparing adult education and related social policy. The three-year project, begun in January 2002, compared perspectives of policy-makers and adult learners in urban and rural sites in each of the countries. At the micro or experience level, we sought to find out who was studying and why, and how and where they were studying. At the macro or intention level, we compared policy goals, the process of policy development and policy tools. The study to date has reviewed key documents and interviewed over 100 individuals in two sites in Sweden and six sites in Canada. Adults in the two countries shared similar goals and reasons for wanting to complete their basic education. While there were also similarities in the political rhetoric about human capital investment, there were significant differences between the two countries in the implicit public philosophy, the policy development process and policy tools related to adult learning.

## Social inclusion versus economic imperative

Sweden

The idea of raising the educational level of the population, *folkbildning*, has been connected to adult learning in Sweden for over a hundred years. It began with establishment of the first folk high schools and study circles to provide education for the children of farm families who often could not attend school because they were needed to work on the farms. This goal was still evident in a variety of ways in 2003. The spontaneous response of a young counsellor at the state funding agency for students summed up public attitudes about the role of education in building social inclusion. Asked whether immigrants ever had to wait to get funding to attend language classes, she seemed genuinely surprised and promptly said "No, never! They need the language to participate in the community!"

The first clue to a different understanding of literacy was that the term "literacy" did not appear in Swedish documentation. Adult education was an inclusive concept and the term "under-educated" designated adults who had not completed compulsory or high school education. There seemed to be a common understanding that "literacy is not an issue in Sweden. Everyone here can read" (J. Norberg, *personal communication,* Sept. 17, 2002).

The basic entry or literacy level of classroom instruction was therefore integrated into the formal adult education available to Swedes over the age of 19. During our time in Sweden, there was no evidence of public awareness campaigns such as Literacy Action Day or International Adult Learners' Week.

The Swedish national government first addressed the under-education of a subsection of the population in 1968 when it established the municipal adult education system (*komvux*). This was expressly a compensatory system for those who had been excluded from higher education in the hierarchical school system that had existed until 1957. "Adult education was no longer a marginal activity...with the introduction of adult 'education equivalent to primary and
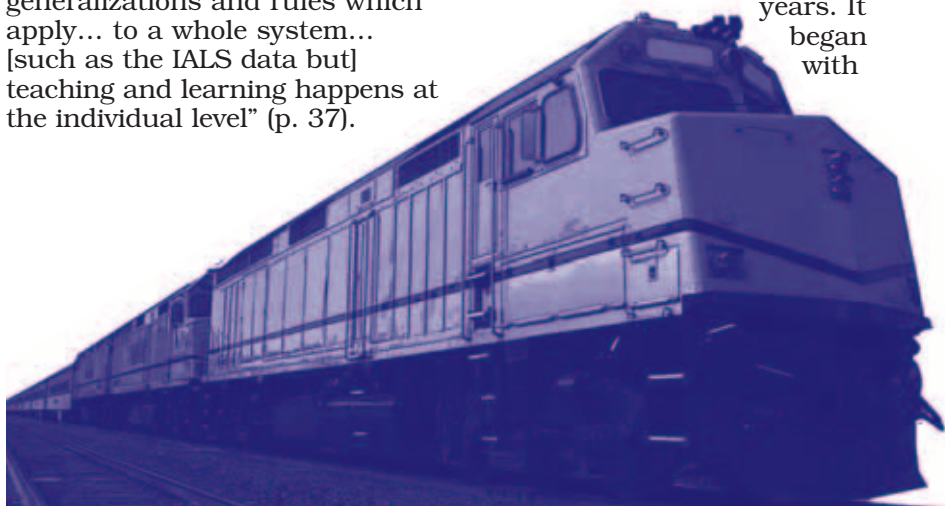
secondary school and...a permanent structure for educational TV and radio programmes' " (Rubenson, 1997, p. 72). Adult basic education (literacy) continues to be taught by paid professionals. Funding allocations to municipalities have been based on either the level of regional unemployment or the number of adults attending adult education in the previous year. Funding for smaller municipalities was often compromised because in the words of one administrator, "How many people do you think there are in this place who don't have their high school education?" Program administrators submitted detailed annual statistics and developed budgets for their programs but did not have the uncertainty of project funding. No one seemed to see how these reports affected policy decisions. This system of municipal adult education still exists throughout Sweden and, in most municipalities, there were no waiting lists to get into adult education programs. [See Box1]

Swedish for Immigrants classes were funded by a separate state allocation to municipalities based on the number of immigrants in the region. Moreover, the language training was not time-limited but continued until proficiency was achieved. (see Swedish Education:www.skolverket.se/english/index.shtml). Adult educators were trained teachers and unionized municipal employees. Study grants and loans for adult students were administered by a separate state agency; childcare, both before and after school, was administered through the schools.

In addition to the formal system, study circles have existed in Sweden for the past hundred years, as well as folk high schools. The Swedish national government provides funding for these and other learning opportunities for adults ensuring diverse learning opportunities for adults from a broad range of social and cultural backgrounds.

A current policy concern is an aging population and the need to retrain older workers due to anticipated skill shortages. The Adult Education Initiative, a five-year strategy introduced in 1992, was intended to diversify learning opportunities. Injecting an additional $56 for each Swede was a politically acceptable way of addressing record levels of high unemployment resulting from the economic recession of the early 1990s. It led to an upsurge in the number of adults applying for adult education which meant a doubling of staffing in larger municipalities. However, as the initiative came to an end, there was a drop in the number of students and an inevitable staff reduction. Instructors with less seniority had to find other employment. One administrator lamented that the remaining staff in her program were all nearing retirement.

There are still policy challenges. For example, the future of municipal adult education in Sweden is uncertain since in 2006 municipalities will have full authority over their own budgets. In one urban municipality, the move to private provision has already resulted in the decimation of municipal delivery. A young woman commented that there was now a two-year waiting list to get into adult upgrading in that centre.

BOX 1

Features of the formal adult education system in Sweden

- Priority given to adults with the least education

- No fee for education at any level

- Educational leave has been extended to cover adult basic education, and

- Study grants and loans for students (learners)

Canada

In Canada, literacy is typically understood as the lowest level of adult education and *learners* at this level are helped by *practitioners*, a term that includes instructors and volunteer tutors rather than teachers. There is a stigma attached to the term literacy despite efforts to position it as a spectrum of skills. The ability to read and write at a basic level such as Grade Five is often a prerequisite for acceptance into formal adult education programs. Insofar as governments discuss literacy it is generally as an economic imperative within the framework of human capital theory. Low literacy skills are considered a deficit, either in the economy or society, with the onus for skills development perhaps falling to individuals or the business sector. Programs are often evaluated on the percentage of their learners who exit into employment or at least further training.

In Canada, during the timeframe of this study, there was no universally available publicly funded system of adult basic education to provide compensatory education for adults in any jurisdiction. Instead, adults at a low literacy level generally use a patchwork of volunteer programs or projects offered by community based organizations. There was no reliable schedule of adult learning opportunities. The charitable nature of provision could be a disincentive and a disservice to adults who might lack self-confidence in a learning context. The reliance on project funding rather than more secure operational funding means that many staff hours are spent writing proposals and reports at the expense of service delivery. There are the irregularity and uncertainty of relying on volunteers to help adults who may have had difficulties learning in the regular school system when they had professional teachers. Furthermore, the ratio of hours spent training volunteers to the hours

the same volunteers actually spend tutoring is not clear. Learning opportunities are neither frequent nor reliable for adults with limited skills.

A recent study that tried to determine why adults did not choose to participate in literacy programs (Long, 2002) found that practitioners and administrators in Canada spend considerable time and effort to increase public awareness about the importance of literacy. The IALS showed that adults functioning at Level Two do not consider themselves to have a "literacy problem". Those at Level One are more likely to respond to public awareness campaigns but they may have the most serious learning challenges, either learning or physical disabilities or second language needs. Often they cannot pass the entrance requirements for existing classroom programs. The irony is that volunteer tutors are often the only option for learners with the greatest learning challenges. Literacy programs spend considerable time recruiting, training and matching volunteers with tutors. While tutors can sometimes work miracles, one-on-one tutoring cannot provide the peer support, professional expertise and more intensive programming of a classroom.

Who was studying and why?

Adults learn when they want to learn and have the opportunity to do so (Langer, 1987). These personal motives are shared by Swedish and Canadian adults. [See BOX 2] Often adults realize the importance of getting further education and are "more focused" when they are older and have children. Nevertheless, adults out of school for some time often said they had forgotten what they had learned, lacked confidence in a formal learning context, and had trouble adjusting to the learning environment. An orientation to prepare adults for the routine of study could be beneficial and yet adults often felt they were not learning anything in such courses. In both countries, older

workers, particularly men, were less likely to participate in adult education programs.

Where and how were adults learning?

In Canada, adult upgrading was a prerequisite to higher education and, often, to employment. There were long waiting lists for adult basic education programs at two of our Canadian sites, and the budget for training allowances was often spent before the academic year-end so some who wanted to study might not get funding; they could not "get a ticket to ride". The recourse for those who did not meet entrance requirements was to seek out volunteer tutors or drop-in learning centres, if these existed.

In Sweden, adults usually did not have to wait to enter adult education programs and had the opportunity to learn in a variety of ways. Varying levels of counselling and mentoring support were also available. Moreover, learning at any level seemed to be accepted and valued. For adults with special learning needs, Sweden provided language training for immigrants and refugees until they achieved competency. The classroom support provided for dyslexic adults in Sweden was a more dependable, systematic approach than the volunteer tutoring available in Canada.

Adult learning can take place in formal, nonformal and informal ways. The Swedish state supported adult education in all three. Swedes throughout the country have had access to formal education since 1967. Tri-partite agreements provided workplace education for unionized workers. Public policy encouraged informal learning through subsidies to newspapers and publicly funded television. Livingstone (2000) reported that the informal sector was where most adults were already learning but policy discussions focused almost exclusively on formal and nonformal learning. Public policy could play an important role in encouraging

> ### BOX 2
>
> **Individuals' reasons for study in Sweden and Canada**
>
> - Improving job prospects
> - helping their children with schoolwork
> - meeting new people and "doing coffee" (Assarsson & Sipos-Zackrisson, 2001)
> - learning specific skills
> - learning something new

informal learning and also public learning sites such as libraries.

Adult education presents a similar hope and promise to adults in Canada and Sweden but there was a significant difference in the number and variety of learning opportunities and access to them. This reflected differences in policy intent in Canada and Sweden. When we compared the overall experience of adult learners in the two countries, the biggest difference was not in the classroom experience itself but rather how adults got into the classroom. In Sweden, there were many scheduled trains as well as other modes of transportation; everyone (under age 50) could get on a train without a ticket and receive financial and other support. In Canada, the train schedule was irregular and only certain groups of people could get tickets.

Social entitlement versus personal responsibility

In Sweden, adult education has been a free municipal program with universal access and priority to the least-educated. Adult education is considered a compensatory or second chance for adults. Social benefits facilitate adult learning. State funding also goes towards nonformal and informal learning (Kapsalis, 2001). The idea of social inclusion seems to underlie these policies. In the September 2003 national election, the party that cam-paigned for lower taxes was soundly defeated.

In Canada, there has not been a comprehensive adult education policy at either a national or provincial level, and literacy is a charitable cause (see www.nald.ca). Public funds are used to promote literacy (see LEARN in the yellow pages of any Canadian telephone directory) but without increased learning opportunities to meet resulting demand. The onus remains on individuals but access to programs typically goes to those most likely to succeed. The recourse for individuals who do not meet entrance requirements is the volunteer tutor system. English as Second Language programs for immigrants is typically time-limited and often unavailable in rural centres. While adult education is considered an economic imperative by policy-makers (Doray & Rubenson, 1997) there is no public commitment to increasing learning opportunities for adults as a second chance. The concept of civic literacy by political scientist Henry Milner may explain the differences between the countries.

A virtuous circle versus a vicious circle

Milner (2002) argues that Sweden exemplifies high civic literacy and a virtuous circle in that the electorate discusses and understands public issues. The result is high voter turnout and support for taxation levels that serve to maintain the quality of social life in the country. In Canada, civic literacy is lower and voters are not as informed; voter turnout is lower with political discourse focusing more on the individual benefit of lower taxes. The result is a vicious circle in which those who benefit most from the system vote to maintain their own interest and the status quo. Social policy privileges those already benefiting from the social system. [See review of Milner's *Civic Literacy*, p. 22]

Supply and demand - Challenges for policymakers

The Swedish response to high unemployment in the face of the knowledge economy and globalization was to increase the number and variety of "adult education trains" and the number of passes available. Following the Adult Education Initiative, there was a further move toward demand-driven learning opportunities through the establishment of learning centres. An additional current challenge is over-capacity in the formal adult education system. More than thirty years after the introduction of the municipal adult education system, an ever smaller number of adults needed or sought compensatory education, particularly in smaller centres. How can municipalities ensure regular and scheduled trains when there is little interest in traveling on them? What are the challenges of staffing and programming continuous intake? Can learning centres address this? What of public accountability when learning is self-directed? And finally, will individually motivated learning provide the skills needed in the workplace?

In Canada, considerable resources are spent on public awareness campaigns. The importance of traveling has been reinforced in the public mind, but the number of opportunities has not increased. In fact, the demand, not surprisingly, often comes from individuals with very limited education, learning disabilities, or second language issues. While these individuals can benefit from the personal support volunteers provide, they deserve to have professional and experienced help to achieve their educational goals. The Canadian government appears to want adult literacy levels to improve but rather than establish public policy and fund to support adult learning, it seems to assume that the volunteer sector or the provinces will respond to the demand from increased public awareness. There has been more rhetoric than policy or funding for literacy.

Do policymakers forget the people?

"Water is invisible to fish"
– Marshall McLuhan

Adult educators and policymakers are themselves firmly entrenched in the existing educational system. They have succeeded in and benefited from this system, and are likely to make assumptions about how it works for others. To extend the travel analogy, policymakers typically can travel by air, and have never used the "adult basic education train." How can policymakers and educators move beyond their own world view to design policy that better suits the learning needs and daily realities of individuals at the experience end of the policy spectrum?

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# Civic literacy:

How informed citizens make democracy work

Reviewed by Nayda Veeman

Since the publication of the International Adult Literacy Survey in 1995, adult educators have been interested in factors accounting for Sweden's superior adult literacy levels. Even more surprising was the fact that Sweden, with the highest adult literacy levels in the survey, was the first participating country to introduce a national adult education initiative. How could it be that the electorate would accept the necessary levels of taxation to further invest in an already well-endowed sector?

Civic Literacy provides an explanation of the Swedish electorate's continued support of the high taxation levels needed to maintain social equity policies such as adult education. The book is the result of Montreal professor and social activist Henry Milner's twenty year intellectual journey to understand what accounts for the sustainability of welfare states such as Sweden and other Scandinavian democracies. He argues that high levels of political knowledge and active civic involvement in the political process help to sustain social equity.

Milner argues that while a concept of social capital (as suggested in Putnam's *Bowling Alone*) may help to explain or at least reflect the erosion of public trust, it does not adequately explain the disengagement of individuals from the political process. Civic literacy, where voters understand policy choices, results in a ***virtuous circle*** that benefits the society as a whole. Policies that encourage and sustain adult literacy levels are integral to civic literacy. In contrast, a ***vicious circle*** results when the public is ill-informed with the result that only those sectors of society that benefit, for example from reduced taxation levels, will see a point in voting. One observable difference between the two is whether newspapers, as in Sweden, or television, as in North America, is the primary source of information.

Civic Literacy is a very readable account of information and analysis compiled from a range of research and surveys. The book has 189 pages of clearly written text, 71 pages of appendices and explanatory notes, and a comprehensive list of references.
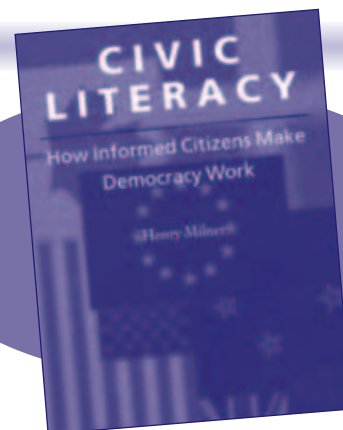
Although Milner neglects to mention that proportional representation and the coincidence of municipal and state elections may encourage voter turnout in Sweden, his book provided me with some very valuable insights into the relationship between social policy and adult education in Sweden.

Nayda Veeman has worked in adult education since 1980 and she was the executive director of the Saskatchewan Literacy Network from 1989-2000. She earned her doctorate at the University of Saskatchewan where she collaborated on a comparative study of adult literacy policy in Canada and Sweden with funding from SSHRC Valuing Literacy Initiative.

293 pages, ISBN 1584651725 (cloth) 1584651733 (pbk.)

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Nayda Veeman completed her PhD at the University of Saskatchewan in April 2004 after leaving her position as Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Literacy Network (SLN). She was on the board of the Movement of Canadian Literacy from 1995 to 2000, and was president from 1997 to 1999.

Keith Walker is a Professor of Educational Administration with the College of Education and College of Graduate Studies at the University of Saskatchewan. He has taught courses in the organization of education in Canada, case studies in leadership ethics, political and jurisprudential philosophy in public policy making, ethics, and governance and decision-making.

Angela Ward is a professor in the Department of Curriculum Studies at the University of Saskatchewan with interest in literacy in cross-cultural settings. Her experience working with Aboriginal peoples has been pertinent to this study.
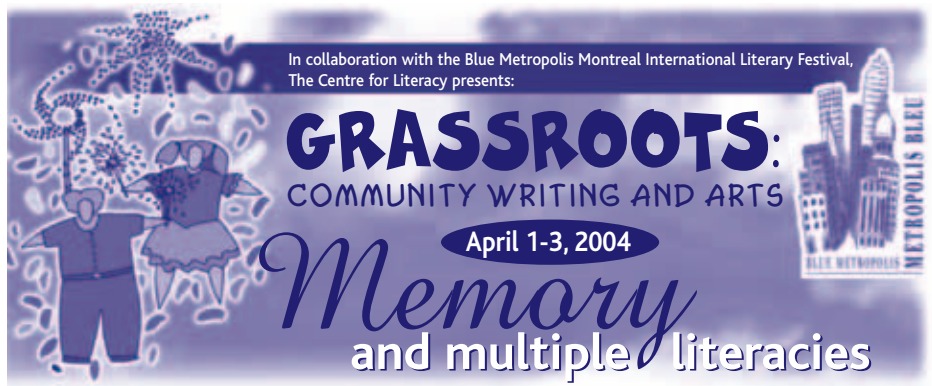
Grassroots: Community Writing and Arts

The Centre through various partnerships promotes a conceptual framework that broadens the idea of literacy beyond words to include community arts. We continue to highlight the changing notion of literacy. This includes growing recognition that reading and writing are not simple, but involve complex processes in the brain to make meaning from systems of marks. Print is only one system of marks; we also make meaning from numbers, from musical notes, from images and from combinations of these. The notion of "multiple literacies" helps us understand the many ways people have of making meaning from symbols.

While schools are only recently asking how the practice of multiple literacies can be used to reach more students, at the community level, there have long been programs and organizations that engage adults and at-risk youth through theatre, photo-graphy, film, video, and music, as well as writing. Many were doing this work before the term "multiple literacies" was coined.

We try to showcase outstanding examples each year at the Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival with whom we have collaborated since 1999. This is a rich partnership that bridges the considerable gap between the literacy of high culture and literacies of the street. Integrating a community writing strand in a mainsteam literary festival has been a model for other communities and has inspired many new adult readers and writers since it began.

In this section, we include excerpts from presentations and readings at the 2004 and 2005 festivals.

In collaboration with the Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival, The Centre for Literacy presents:

GRASSROOTS: COMMUNITY WRITING AND ARTS
April 1-3, 2004
Memory **and multiple literacies**

The 2004 Grassroots: Community Writing and Arts event brought together contributors Montreal and Sherbrooke, and from Toronto, Edmonton, Vancouver, and London (UK). They were invited to consider the work they do in relation to the theme of "memory."

We sent four quotations to start the process.

"Memory is the diary that we all carry about with us."
– Oscar Wilde

"In memory, everything seems to happen to music."
–Tennessee Williams

"Literature gives us a memory of lives we did not lead"
–Unknown

"Memory is the only way home."
–Unknown

Memory and learning

Reading specialists agree that the level of reading comprehension is dependent on prior knowledge which can be seen as one form of memory. For some, memories can be a barrier to learning. Almost every ABE or literacy program pays attention to memory; many focus on helping students mediate and shape their memories as a way to gain self-esteem and move on. The Blue Metropolis session offered us a chance to share some of the ways that memory connects to learning and understanding of multiple literacies.

Presenters included:

• Bonnie Soroke and a participant from Zippers, Vancouver
• Mary Norton, Judy Murphy and a participant from Drawing out the Self (DOTS), The Learning Centre, Edmonton
• Robert Davis and four writer-performers from Beat the Streets Peace Power, Toronto
• Ann Scowcroft and a student writer from Literacy in Action, Sherbrooke, QC
• Joshua Dorsey and Danny Parr from O2 Film Crew, Montreal
• Julian Sefton-Green, Head of Media Arts and Education, WAC Media and Performing Arts Center, London (UK)

Moderator: Linda Shohet, The Centre for Literacy

PEACE POWER CREW - BEAT THE STREET

Peace Power is a project of Beat the Street, a learning centre for youth who are at-risk, street-involved or homeless. Four exceptional performers make up the Peace Power crew. Sean Gosling, Junie Henry, Tiffany Martin and Eric Daniels – all in their early twenties – have current or past experience of being street-involved.

Peace Power is a code and set of practices for building community safety and youth empowerment.

Beat the Street incorporates Peace Power into its programs and crew conducts outreach on Peace Power themes. Combining original music and spoken word, graphics, and forum theatre, their vibrant performances communicate their personal experiences to student audiences. They try to express and encourage the legitimacy of youth voices in our culture.

While posing questions to their audiences about personal choice, community and self respect, they communicate a three-fold message:

— CHASE YOUR DREAMS
- DEVELOP YOURSELF, AND
- WIDEN YOUR PERSPECTIVE.

The group gave a one-hour performance. Each member presented an original song on the festival theme of "memory," and they concluded with a group song. They accompanied the work with projected visuals including their own photography.

Group Memory Song
by Tiffany Martin

Chorus

If the past comes back and
interrupts your flow
Remember the past is the past
You need to let it go

Memories are only true to me
I can look to my past
To what lead me to be me

But I know things get changed
The mind plays games
And I get confused again ('cause)

I saw a red dress when you saw
green
And he said he saw something in
between

It's only in my mind you see
With this knowledge I am free
Now is where I be

All lyrics copyright the author, ©2004
Produced at Beat the Street, 425 Adelaide St. W.,
Toronto, ON 416 979-3361

Group Memory Song
by Eric Daniels

Memories they can hold you
down
I've got to let them go
To move on
Memories
Some are good
And some are bad
I treat them like they're a fad
Here one day and gone the next

Memories
Good and bad
Will hold me back
Clear my head
Move into the shining light

That light is my future
Fight back
The urge
To dwell on my past

Memories
I wish they could all be good
If I could have it
That way I would

Then I know
That I'll be fine
No more worries
About the times
I felt like crap
They fade away

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Produced at Beat the Street, 425 Adelaide St. W.,
Toronto, ON 416 979-3361

My House
by Tiffany Martin

Come let me take you on a journey
I'll hold your hand and lead you into me.
Don't be scared I'll be there

Seriously,

If you want to go for a ride I'll open my mouth
wide, stick your head deep inside.
Welcome to my street number four. Walk up the
stairs and knock on the door.
Now it's too late to turn back. Brace yourself for a
subconscious attack.

(Chorus)
Though things are vague I gaze through the haze to
remember good days those of laughter and play
take the bad ones away. To the demons and ghosts I
will not lay down no way. Now is where I stay.

You have to be well prepared, 'cos there are images
that might rip and tear.
Some of the doors are locked so beware. Some of
the halls have been closed for repair and some
aren't really there.

Intricate locks on the door,
Big gaps in the floor.
Images I've long forgotten.
I've been trying for a while to get the blood off the
bathroom tiles.
Caked from years of release, my momentary peace.

Chorus

Now you might hear voices that don't belong to you.
They are the demons that seek out to destroy you.
To get you lost in the maze of my mind.
Warning
Do not be fooled they aren't kind.

Chorus

Now the demons live in the basement an obvious
choice of mental displacement. Coming out in
my sleep,
When I'm too weak
To keep them hidden in the deep.
So I'm forced to creep trying not to make a peep
waiting for the day I can throw them in the heap.

Chorus

DANNY PARR AND JOSH DORSEY

O2 IN '05

Community development through film-making:
A local case study

In the past three years, we have been following the trajectory of a community-based film collective in a disadvantaged neighborhood of Montreal as an example of what can happen when professional artists give of themselves and nurture the talents of young participants in unlikely settings. Joshua Dorsey and Danny Parr are our subjects.

Film-maker Joshua Dorsey helped set up O2, a filmmaking collective originally comprised of a core of seven teenagers, aged 15-17, from Montreal's Pointe St. Charles district, a community educator, and two film professionals. The crew evolved from a volunteer-based educational initiative (O2's "Oxygen for Creativity" Program) that paired established artists with children and teenagers from disadvantaged neighborhoods. Joshua initially challenged a group of inner-city teenagers to show up once a week to learn the basics of filmmaking. Eight months later, after making two shorts and a music video, the group challenged Joshua: Let them make their first feature film. ONE DAY, the O2 Film Crew's first collectively

A SCENE FROM "A DAY SO BEAUTIFUL."

written and directed feature film, drew on the real-life experiences of its teenage creators to tell the story of seven friends swept up in the frenzied events of a single day. It was selected for the 2003 Slamdance Festival. Josh and Danny Parr, one of the writer/actors, showed clips and talked about their experience at the 2003 Blue Metropolis Community Writing/Arts event.

After the success of ONE DAY, Danny went on to create work of his own and to find film roles. In 2004, Danny wrote, directed and acted in a film called "A Day So Beautiful". Josh produced it and found support from the National Film Board (NFB). A fifteen-minute film, it follows a day with Christopher, a young man from Pointe St. Charles, alienated from his friends and surroundings, and for part of the time from himself. Yet as the day goes on, he comes to sense that life has value and that every day is a Day so Beautiful. Only at the conclusion does the viewer learn that

Christopher is confronting terminal illness. Danny shared his film at the 2004 Blue Metropolis; it was later shown at the Montreal Film Festival, and noticed by a member of Concordia University's scholarship fund. Danny is now studying film at Concordia on full scholarship. The film also won a Bronze Plaque at the Columbus International Film and Video Festival in November 2005.

In 2005, Josh started the next O2 project working with a new group of about 40 neighbourhood youth collaboratively developing a script for an ensemble feature film for which he raised close to a $1-million dollar budget. The NFB is participating and Melissa Malkin of Silo Corporation is producing. Danny is working on it as well. They will show clips and talk at the 2006 Blue Metropolis.

There are issues worth debating about possible models for arts work at the community level. In 2004, Julian Sefton-Green, well-known British educator and community arts researcher, engaged Josh in a discussion over whether the $1-million dollars could be put to better use supporting many small O2-like programs, or sustained endeavours such as the Weekend Arts Center (WAC) he helps run in England [see p.28]. Josh contends that people working from a position of disadvantage should have access to the same level of professional funding and production values as those in the mainstream, and that he is mentoring young people like Danny who can eventually straddle both worlds.

Whichever position you may take on this, O2 is giving us a chance to follow a few of the participants over time to see where this experience will take them. What is clear from both the WAC and the O2 examples is that they can attract many young people who would not make it through traditional schools or score high on literacy surveys. [LS]

Un-Zipping lips:
Artifacts and literacy

Bonnie Soroke is an adult educator whose interest in exploring learners' experiences in their education led her to develop the Zippers Sculpture program in British Columbia.

It was Bonnie's work with adult basic students that lead her to look for ways to create images that were dynamic, alive and changeable. Eventually she lit upon zippers as sculpting material and began to explore ways to make the zippers stand up and 'move'. She accomplished this by sewing in wire to make them malleable. Her students shaped different sized zippers to portray their prior learning experiences, depicting their teachers variously as 'hovering', 'oppressive', 'insensitive' or 'collaborative,' and their own reactions as 'knotted', 'silenced' or 'oppressed'.

It was Bonnie's work with adult basic students that lead her to look for ways to create images that were dynamic, alive and changeable.

By talking about their sculptures, students are able to bring their past experiences into the classroom; they can interpret and reinterpret them in ways that help their tutor understand how these previous encounters have affected the way the students now learn. The process also helps tutors understand what style of learning might or might not work with a particular student.

For her workshops, Bonnie Soroke uses recycled materials – collecting zippers and old clothes from friends and second-hand stores. To make the zippers 'sculptable', Bonnie sews in telephone wire obtained from the local telephone company or scrounged from wastebaskets. The wire, bundled and encased in plastic sheathing, is often discarded after workers finish replacing telephone wire with fibre-optic cable.

After they have seen a visual representation of zipper sculptures and how others have used the materials, workshop participants are encouraged to create their own artifacts.

Bonnie wrote about her research in an article entitled "Artifacts for Research", in *Literacies*, Fall 2003. She facilitated a workshop for tutors and teachers as part of the 2004 Community Writing and Arts event.

Information:
"Artifacts for Research":
http://www.literacyjournal.ca/literacies/2-2003/practice/5/1.htm
Reading and Writing Centre:
literacy.cc.mala.bc.ca/
Zipper Workshops: www.soroke.com

COMMUNITY WRITING

A sustainable arts, education, community development model

The WAC Performing Arts and Media College in London (UK) began more than twenty five years ago as the Weekend Arts Centre, an initiative to provide training in the performing arts for young people from low-income families. Over time, the organization extended its range of programs to develop a practice of arts education which values the general 'transferrable' or 'key' skills that young people learn from arts experiences. Today, it offers training for digital media artists and specialized courses for young people with learning difficulties. It also prepares arts trainers to work in educational contexts. WAC organizes training opportunities for over 600 young people a year in the creative and cultural industries. It has a national and international reputation for innovative ways of teaching and learning, offering access to cutting edge media and arts projects. It is involved in a number of strategic research projects and partnerships that aim to influence the development of the education system. WAC continues to give socially marginalized young people priority access to all its programs, a philosophy that underpins its lifelong learning programs   WAC is supported by the Arts Council of England, the Heritage Lottery, in addition to grants and strategic organizational partnerships.

It is a model of what is possible through creative alliances that link education, the arts the business world and community development.

www.wac.co.uk

Julian Sefton-Green has been the Head of Media Arts and Education at WAC since 1998, where he develops and manages projects that include ICT resources, media education programs, social inclusion projects and research. He also spends time at the University of South Australia where he has taught and done research for many years.

He is best known to Canadians for his work in cultural studies and media education. Among many publications, he has co-written or edited *Cultural Studies Goes to School: Reading and Teaching Popular Culture* (1994), *Creativity, Young People and New Technologies: the Challenge of Digital Arts* (1999), and *Making Connection: Media Education and Social Inclusion* (2002).

Among his more recent projects at WAC is The Business Basement, a project funded by the London Development Agency to support the development and growth of small businesses in arts and cultural industries. It offers support to current and former WAC students and staff who want to turn an idea into a business. The support comes in the form of space, supplies, use of equipment, mentoring, and/or advice on planning, legal issues, accounting, and more.

See http://www.wac.co.uk/courses_projects/index.html

At Community Writing and Arts 2004, Julian discussed the sustainability of programs such as WAC and showed clips of productions made by some of the young people at the center.

http://people.unisa.edu.au/Julian.Sefton-Green
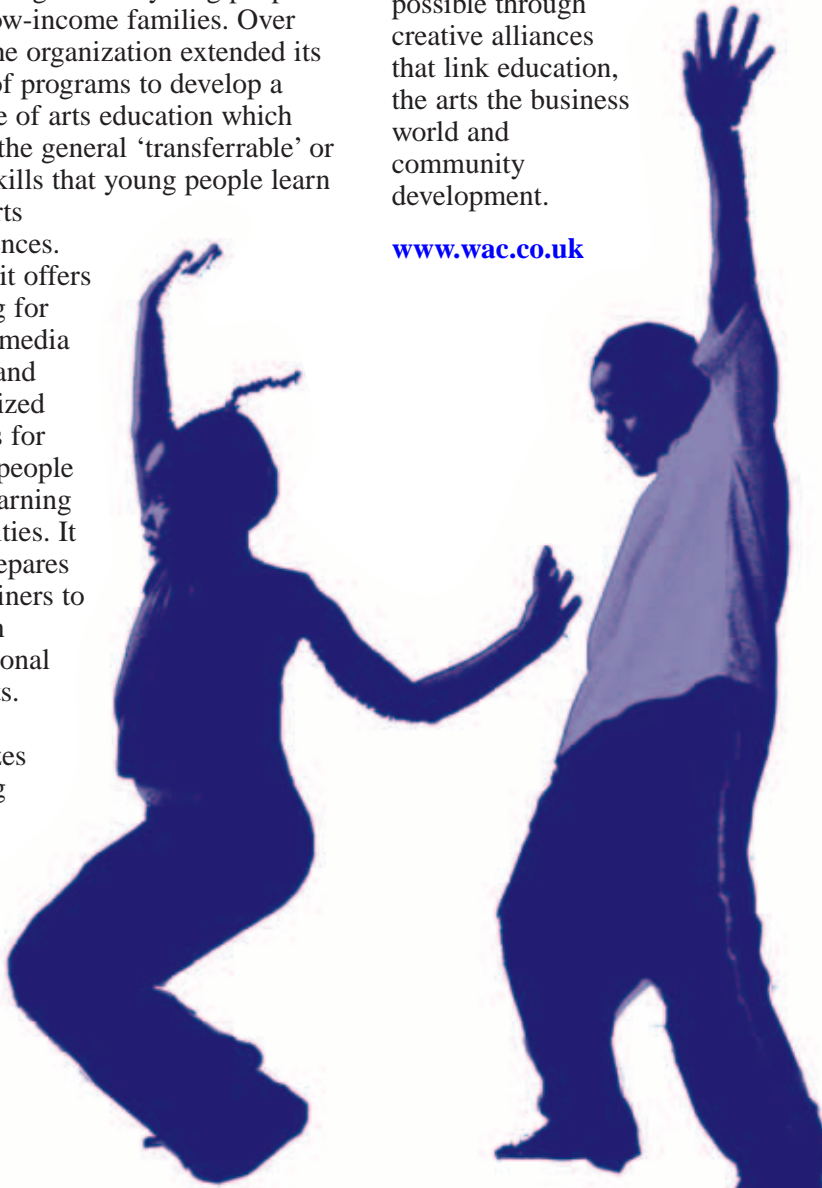
Dialogue sans frontiers/ Can we talk?

The theme of the 2005 Festival *Dialogue sans frontiers/ Can we talk?* took us to the roots of language development and community connection.

Everyone learns to speak unless some cognitive impairment prevents it. Not everyone learns to read and write as naturally. In Western cultures, research has shown that children raised in environments rich in the spoken word tend to have a stronger base for reading and writing. Early exposure to rhythm and sound lays that foundation. However, adults who have not had strong beginnings or been proficient readers in their youth can also move into literacy starting with the powerful rhymes, rhythms and flow of poetry, drama and song. For aboriginal cultures that survived through passing down oral traditions, the challenges today include re-possessing lost languages at the same time as becoming literate in the mainstream languages that can give them voice politically, socially and artistically. It was not by chance that the 1990 Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs entitled a report on aboriginal literacy *You Took My Talk*. Western culture has given writing a privileged place over talk, but new technologies are slowly restoring the importance of the oral.

The 2005 Grassroots: Community Writing and Arts event gathered groups and individuals, from aboriginal and non-aboriginal cultures across Canada, who have mined the richness of talk and oral traditions, and enlarged our understanding of what counts as literacy.
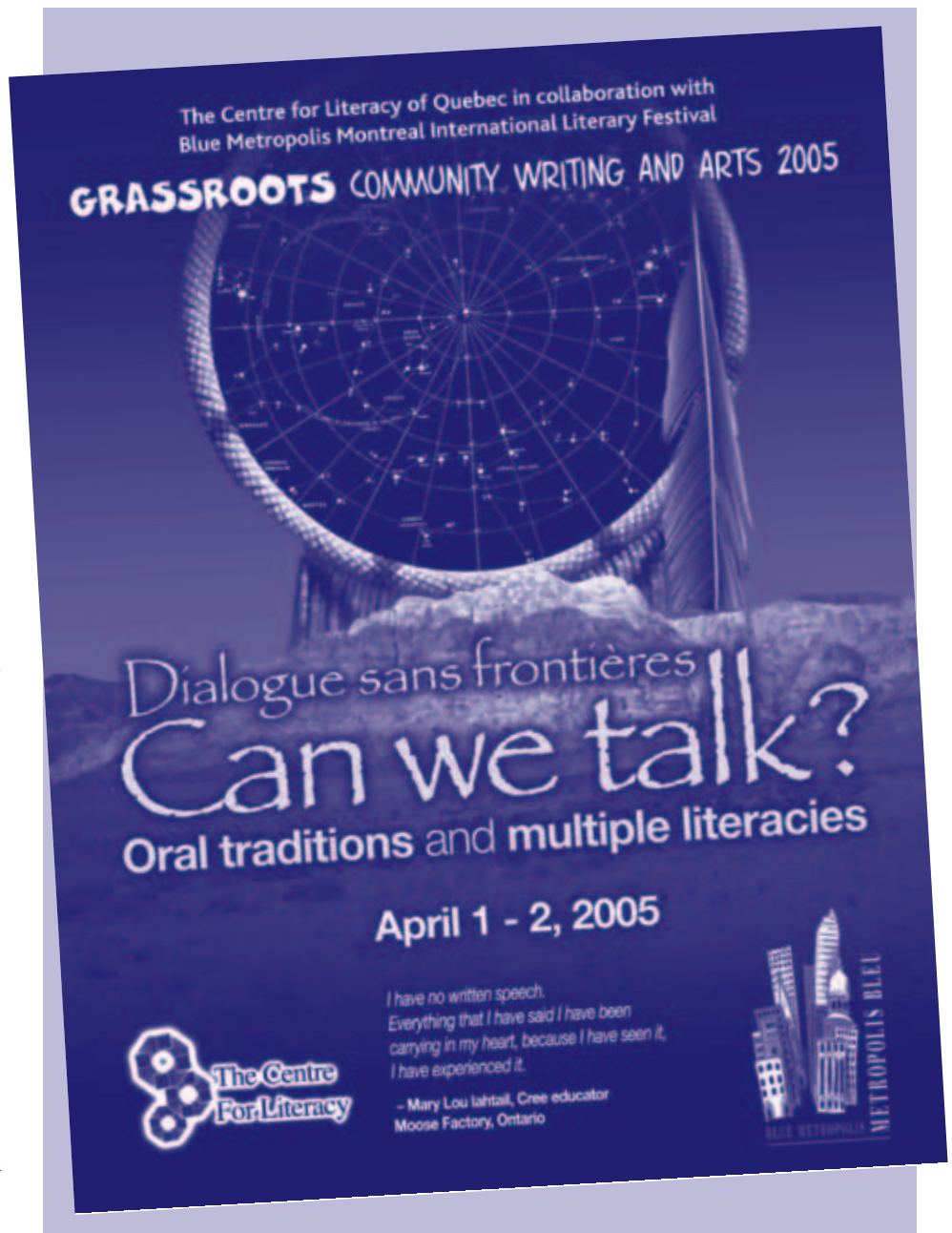
Participants were:

• Larry Loyie and Constance Brissenden, Vancouver

• Helen Woodrow, Agnes Walsh and Millie Johnson, St. John's, Newfoundland

• Nancy Cooper and Rita Buffalo, Toronto and Thunder Bay, Ontario

• Kathy Richan and Laurel Thompson, Literacy in Action, Sherbrooke QC

• Chateauguay Valley Literacy Coalition, Chateauguay QC

Moderator: Linda Shohet
The Centre for Literacy

The Centre for Literacy of Quebec in collaboration with Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival

GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY WRITING AND ARTS 2005

Dialogue sans frontières
Can we talk?
Oral traditions and multiple literacies

April 1 - 2, 2005

I have no written speech.
Everything that I have said I have been carrying in my heart, because I have seen it, I have experienced it.

– Mary Lou Iahtail, Cree educator
Moose Factory, Ontario

The Centre For Literacy

COMMUNITY WRITING

Helen Woodrow – teacher, poet, oral historian, and literacy advocate – has long collected stories from the elders of Newfoundland to ensure that their voices do not die with them. A rare combination of community activist, practitioner-researcher and artist, Helen participated in her second Blue Metropolis festival. She read from *Strong as the Ocean*, a collection of oral histories about women's work in the Newfoundland and Labrador fisheries. Helen told us:

At the age of 98 Louise Belbin told us stories about her work as a beach woman. Making salt fish product is something we assume is summer labour. Louise dispels that notion in this selection of her oral history.

Milley Johnson, Agnes Walsh and Helen Woodrow (not shown) came to the 2005 festival from Newfoundland.

Extract from Louise Belbin:

Jacques Fontaine was me home. Year after, I was here in Grand Bank and went working at the fish down at the beach. I was married and had children then.

You had to go on the beach to earn a few dollars– do the best you could to make ends meet. I wouldn't like to ever see it come back again. That was in the depression years and we knowed it was a depression too. Some hard going days them times.

I know what t'was like on the beach Good Friday. There was patches of snow we'd have to walk between. Poor old Mrs. Matthews up the brook, she used to say, "The bells is ringing and only the good ones is going to church," and we was all on the beach at fish.

One year it was late in the fall the Labrador schooners brought in the last fish and they wanted to get it dried out. T'was some cold in November and December out on the open beach. We only had a pair of low rubber boots and a coverall jacket to wear... It was stronger than our rubber clothes but I still had the sleeve wore right out taking the fish they used to bring in to me.

I thought we should've had more for to suffer the cold. "Come on, Jenny Grant," I said, " I'm going over to Mr. Carr."

"No", she said, "I'm not going."

Nobody going to come with me, what's wrong with you?" I said, "I'm going."

So when I went in the shop, I said to the girls, "Is there anyone in the office with Mr. Carr?" And they said, "No." I had on me beach clothes, see, and me sun shade and they thought there was a stir up over on the beach.

I said, "Can I go in and see Mr. Carr?" "Yes," they said, "You can go in."

I went in, and I said, "Mr. Carr, we got a lot to face now for the time of year and that wet fish. Can't we have a little raise in our pay, cause we needs more now for to wear in the cold weather and we needs better boots. It all takes money and we haven't made much the summer." "No, Mrs." he said, "I must say, you're right. Yes, I will give you a raise."

When I went back, I was going to clap me hands at them. "Guts enough for have a bit of gum into you to get through this world."

Well, I thought t'was right when I made the move and we got the raise cause we did deserve it. I don't think I done wrong there.

Louise's stories and others can be found in Strong as the Ocean: Women's Work in the Newfoundland and Labrador Fisheries (1996) Harrish Press.

Spry
by Mary Dalton

Eight-four and spry as a goat
He set eight drills of potatoes the spring–
His son just got on the construction,
And he was looking to get on, too.
Yes, he's smart as a tack and
he's a good hand to sing,
Knows a hundred songs,
Get him going, out they'll
Tumble–you'll hear him rattling,
Working one up, him leaning
into the song, all six foot of him,
His head full of tunes
Feet tapping,
Eyes capering after the women.

Published in Merrybegot (2003)

Helen Woodrow introduced C.Milley Johnson, a spritely 83-year old community writer who shared the story of a cherished family artifact.

The story of my button

by C. Milley Johnson

All I know about the circumstances of my birth came from my grand-mother, my mother and other relatives who tried to convince me that my coming was some-thing special. When we'd sit in front of the fire in later years the story of my belly button would come up.

I decided to be born early in the morning in the long and hungry month of March, the 13th to be exact. It was a freezing rain storm. My young, vibrant father went for the midwife who we called grannies in my day. Despite the fact I was the first born, I came pretty quick.

In those days, when the umbilical cord was cut, a piece of white cotton about 3 x 3 was cut and was placed on top of the stove. It was scorched to make it sterilized. A button would be greased, either with castor or olive oil, and placed in the centre of the sterilized cotton over the belly button. This kept the belly button from popping out. Then a band would be wrapped around the baby's body and pinned tightly.

My mother had everything ready to dress me but she forgot the button. My grandmother was frantic. I was born in 1922 when buttons in my little town were as scarce as hens' teeth. A large penny would serve the purpose but they were even scarcer than buttons. My sainted grandmother decided to cut one off her new winter coat and that's what happened the night I entered the world.

The button is still in my possession. My mother kept the button and it was also used on my sister and brother. The button disappeared for a while and a bigger search was never seen in history. Even the back yard was dug up. That's where water used to be thrown out before water and sewer was ever heard of in our community.

Several years ago the old house where I was born and raised was torn down. The button was found good as new, with not a blemish on it. Everybody knew about the button so there was no trouble identifying it. On our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary my husband had it made into a necklace. I wore it with pride. It has gone down through the family, and in October it will be used by my granddaughter on her wedding day.
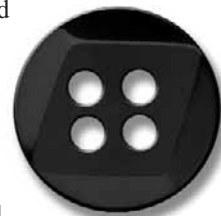
These buttons were also used to entertain children. A piece of cord would be threaded through the two holes in the button and tied. It was placed on the forefinger of each hand and a loop was made at either end. When you spun the button around, it would make a humming sound.

Someone once said, "We rarely forget that which has made a deep impression on our mind." And that is true of me and my button.

Lighting the 8th Fire

by Nancy Cooper

According to many First Nations prophecies, we are in the time of the 7th fire. The 7th fire tells of the emergence of a new people. A people who would retrace their steps to find the sacred ways that had been left behind. The water drum would once again sound its voice, and there would be a rebirth of the Ojibway nation and a rekindling of old fires. At this time the light skinned race would be given a choice. If they would choose the right road, then the 7th fire would light an 8th and final fire – an eternal fire of peace, love and kinship. If the light skinned race would make the wrong choice of roads, then the destruction which they brought with them on coming to this great island would come back to them and cause much death and suffering.

We are now in the time of the 7th fire.

What does it mean for all of us
To be in the time of the 7th fire?
In these days of seemingly insurmountable struggles
With attacks on us from every side
Hated because we are poor, old, Native, black,
Sick, young or any one of a myriad of
Reasons hatred moves in and stays too long.

We must begin to listen to spirit
Ours and others
Listen to the earth – listen HARD through
The layers of concrete
Take care of ourselves and others
Remember what Audre Lorde said
Self care is not an act of self indulgence
It is self preservation
And that in itself
Is an act of political warfare.

Take care of ourselves and others
To keep our power close and help it grow
PRAY
BRING CEREMONY BACK
Turn to our cultural teachings – we all have culture
It's not just something other people have
Learn the ways of your old people
Really know yourself
Because when that happens
You become powerful beyond belief
We can keep our power
Forge alliances
Honour the earth and each other
And watch the changes we dream.

Poems by Maria Petrilli,

Written for Blue Metropolis, Montreal
April 1, 2005

Violence

When I look out the window,
see children hitting each other with sticks

We live in a violent society
Everywhere I go I see violence

In schools kids carry guns for protection.
While other kids carry books.

There are many people suffering
In our society.

All I hear is the ugliness of the world,
But I do not see Love

I wonder if our society will
Ever be loving, happy without
Violence.

Easter Poem

Easter is with bright colours,
And balloons, eggs.

I shall treasure the Easter
Party.

shall remember my son's face,
When he opened his eggs.

How much I love him so.
Your loving eyes when you said:
"Mommy I love you so"

How I remember when I used to
Cradle you in my arms.

Now my wings open to let
My sweet child go.

I Am Human

I am only human, don't take my
Life away

I cannot even compare my life to
Others.

What life is for me is wonderful,
And fun.

Don't judge me, be my friend
We are all living in the same world.

I am as gentle as a cat,
And wild as a lion.

I can be mean sometimes, but
Most of the time I am just me.

I can be humble and never
Mumble.

I am human.

Award-winning Cree writer Larry Loyie and his partner, writer and editor Constance Brissenden from Living Tradition Writers Group (Vancouver, BC)

Writings
by Kathy Bevington

Maria Petrilli, Kathy Bevington & Jan McConnell, Chateauguay Valley Literacy Council Quebec

Marie Joseph Angelique

Marie- Joseph Angelique was the black slave of a wealthy Montreal Merchant who kept her as a slave.

Marie was not happy being a slave, so she ran away, but before Marie ran away, she burned the house down.

Marie was caught. Four months later she was hung and then burned.

This is a true story that happened in Montreal.

Montreal Science Centre

I went to the Montreal Science Centre. I went through the pit that was crossing the void. It looked scary but it has a glass floor.

The mirror that I saw makes you look bigger than what you look. The other mirror that I saw makes you look thinner than what you look.

The television interviews you and you talk into it and you play it back – it tells you what you say.

So I had a wonderful time, it is a nice place to see and visit.

Pollution

A lot of people cause pollution in the air. And they throw garbage all over the cities.

We can stop pollution by using less water and turn off lights and stop throwing garbage all over the cities.

People can stop a lot of pollution by burning less wood in their stoves because the smoke causes a lot of pollution.

China is the world's worst polluter, burns too much coal and has much too many cars, etc.

by Pat Campbell

Improving Native literacy is not a matter of aspiring to what is 'right,' but a process of critique where politics, power, accountability, and outcomes are consciously negotiated to meet mutual objectives for literacy.

– Michael Johnny, 2004, p. 19

Background

In this Masters thesis, Michael Johnny examines the policy framework that has governed literacy in Ontario from 1986 to present and identifies challenges and opportunities for Native literacy. The central question of the thesis is "What are the implications of literacy policy for Native literacy in Ontario?"

Ontario is unique because it is the only province in Canada that has provided a separate and distinct funding envelope for Native Literacy. Since 1986, the Ontario government has funded the development and delivery of adult literacy to Native communities. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) funds the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program and supports a multi-delivery system. The LBS program has two functions: service delivery and service development. However, in the past decade, changes to this policy have challenged the capacity for "Native communities to deliver programs that can successfully meet the needs and aspirations of their learners."

Methodology

Johnny gathered data through field-based surveys and interviews with Native literacy practitioners, observation and dialogue with learners, and a literature analysis. As well, he drew on personal and critical reflection from his work as a practitioner to support and guide the research. The data were

Policy Implications for Native Literacy in Ontario

analyzed through a process of conjunctural analysis. This type of analysis exposes contradictions, which makes it an appropriate tool for examining policy. Barndt (1989) refers to conjunctural analysis as "naming the moment" because this process examines the "balance of current forces, actors, [and] events to determine opportunities for action that the moment offers." (p. 83). According to Johnny using this methodology, Johnny was able to offer action-oriented recommendations.

Implications

Between 1993 and 1998, the development of provincial standards and accountability began to marginalize Native literacy programs and practices. Despite the Native literacy community's involvement in the development of these standards, government policy was becoming increasingly removed from their assumptions about the holistic nature of literacy. The accountability framework reduced literacy to a set of cognitive skills, with the intent of providing students with the

knowledge to succeed in the global economy.

According to Michael Johnny, "provincial policies that identify literacy as a tool to support economic development" are most challenging to Native literacy because aligning literacy with employment restricts programming and does not support holistic literacy practices that embrace the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical aspects of self. As a case in point, Mother Tongue Literacy or literacy in Aboriginal languages and life skills are not considered acceptable activities in the current Literacy and Basic Skills program.

In 1994, Core Quality Standards were introduced, beginning an era of top-down policy for accountability. Two years later, the government introduced the Recognition of Adult Learning Strategy (RALS). This multi-year reform is "based on common learning outcomes with clear standards of attainment which apply to all literacy providers." The learning outcomes are contained within a matrix of five

literacy levels, each containing three domains: numeracy, communications, and self-management and self-direction. The Native stream's biggest concern about these outcomes is that "learning is reduced to a quantitative indicator of success, and does not reflect a holistic approach". More general concerns include the fact that the outcomes were based on the Grades 1 to 9 curriculum, and not on research and practice in adult literacy.

By 1998, the Native literacy field began to challenge the impact of RALS as it became increasingly difficult to deliver holistic programming when delivery was reduced to a numbers game. RALS became the handmaiden to political forces that focused on outcomes assessment, a standardized benchmark of skills and accreditation of these skills.

Michael Johnny asked practitioners and learners the following two questions among many: "What constitutes successful Native literacy programming? What outcomes should Native literacy work towards?" The predominant responses were non-academic, which indicates there is a mismatch between the learning outcomes endorsed by the government and the aspirations of the Native literacy community. Nevertheless, there is hope, as the domain of self-management and self-direction is more reflective of the emotional and spiritual needs of learners. Interestingly, the 142-page document, *Working with Learning Outcomes: Validation Draft* (1998) contains only a two-sided page to outline the domain of self-management and self-direction. Michael Johnny sees this as both a restriction and an opportunity as it has lead to research to expand and articulate non-academic outcomes within the context of self-management.

Native literacy programs want to operate within a holistic framework that embraces the

principles of being "community-based" and "learner-centred." These two principles are also found in the Ontario Literacy and Basic Skills Program Guidelines manual: however, the Native community and the government field consultants define these terms in different ways. For the Native stream, 'community-based' provides a broad framework for programming, such as Mother Tongue literacy. For the government, community-based programming must fit within the parameters of the learning outcomes matrix.

A holistic framework that embodies the whole person—spirit, emotions, mind, and body—is needed to meet the needs and aspirations of Native communities.

In 2001, the Native stream witnessed a policy change that had tremendous impact. They lost a dedicated Aboriginal field consultant who had experience working in Native literacy when a new policy dictated that field consultants would focus more on a geographical region rather than a cultural stream. Multiple consultants, employed by the Ministry, now monitor the service delivery and determine what constitutes an eligible Aboriginal learning activity.

Recommendations
This study offers three recommendations. First, the provincial literacy system needs to be re-examined by the MTCU and the Native literacy stream. Together, the two parties need to work on developing a literacy system that meets the needs and aspirations of Ontario's Aboriginal communities and

Ontario's political and economic realities. Second, research is needed to articulate qualitative and quantitative outcomes that apply to Native literacy learners. Third, the MTCU needs to lead development of a mutual accountability framework in which results-oriented learning replaces outcomes-based learning in fulfilling the broad goals for literacy.

A holistic framework that embodies the whole person— spirit, emotions, mind, and body—is needed to meet the needs and aspirations of Native communities. The current literacy policy "has focused considerable attention to supporting mental and physical (demonstrating skills) development." This study advocates for a framework that also supports spiritual development.

References
Barndt, D. (1989). *Naming the moment: Political analysis for action.* Toronto, ON: Jesuit Centre for Social Faith and Justice.

Johnny, Michael R. (2004). *Policy implications for Native literacy in Ontario.* Peterborough, ON: Trent University.

Ontario Ministry of Education and Training. (1998). *Working with learning outcomes: Validation Draft.* Queen's Printer for Ontario: Toronto, ON.

For more information about this thesis, see the Directory of Canadian Adult Literacy Research in English at http://www.nald.ca/crd/

Pat Campbell has worked in adult literacy since 1985, and has been a program coordinator, curriculum developer, researcher, writer, facilitator, consultant, and sessional instructor at the University of Alberta. She has edited and co-authored several publications, including *Participatory Practices in Adult Education, the Canadian Adult Reading Assessment,* STAPLE, *Learning for our Health* and *Teaching Reading to Adults: A Balanced Approach.*

RESURCES:
SELECTED ABRIDGED ANNOTATIONS FROM

Adult Basic Education: Impact of Policy on Practice
An annotated bibliography 2004

ISBN: 0-9734295-7-7

This bibliography published by The Centre, provides references and annotations of research articles, project reports, resource guides and other documents that address the issue of policy as it relates to adult basic education and literacy. It includes web sites from government and non-profit agencies in Canada and around the world. The annotations are descriptive and do not analyze or evaluate. Most were abridged from abstracts provided in various databases or by the authors themselves. When these were not available, the annotation was written by researcher Claire Elliott. The original source is indicated in square brackets. Excerpts below have been further abridged. The full-text document is available online or in print

A section is devoted to Canadian Provincial Programs & Policies, as of fall 2004. While not exhaustive, the bibliography offers a core set of essential readings on the topic as a starting point for more in-depth research.

AUSTRALIA

Australian Council for Adult Literacy. (2001). *A literate Australia: National position paper on the future adult literacy and numeracy needs of Australia.* **Retrieved June 15, 2004 from:** www.acal.edu.au/ publications/papers/acal_view/ ALitAustOct01.pdf.
Makes the case for a new, government-wide, national policy to address issues related to adult literacy and numeracy in Australia. Discusses influence of globalization, changing definitions of literacy, and other current trends. Reviews recent literacy policies and standards of Australia, and scans other OECD members' progress for possible models. [CE]

Australian Government. Department for Education, Science and Training. (2003, November). *You can too: Adult learning in Australia: A consultation paper.* **Retrieved June 21, 2004 from** www.dest.gov.au/ ucan2/docs/you_can_too.pdf.
Highlights seven key issues. Calls for recommendations from all stakeholders, including adult learners, business, government and the wider community. [CE]

Castleton, G. & McDonald, M. (2002). *A decade of literacy: Policy, programs and perspectives.* **Retrieved June 7, 2004 from the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Australian Research Consortium web site:** www.staff.vu. edu.au/alnarc/publications/02Castleto nMcDonald.pdf.
Provides an historical overview of national and state literacy policies in Australia, with attention to successes and failures of various programs and initiatives. [ERIC]

Commonwealth Government of Australia. (2000). *National Indigenous English literacy and numeracy strategy, 2000-2004.* **Retrieved June 10, 2004 from the Department of Education, Science and Training web site:** www.dest.gov.au/schools/ publications/2000/LNS.pdf.
Discusses the specific challenges to be met by the Strategy, in raising the performance of Indigenous Australian children to levels prescribed by the recently enacted national education goals. Appendices contain Australia's national educational goals and the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander goals. [ERIC]

Kell, P. (1998). Fro*m the Billabong to the mainstream?: A teachers' guide to Australian training & literacy policy developments 1974-1998.* **Melbourne, Australia: Language Australia Ltd.**
Traces Australian training and literacy policy developments from 1974 to 1998. Discusses global, political, educational, social, and economic trends that have affected its policies, highlighting major events of four distinct policy "epochs" in the vocational education and training (VET) sector. [ERIC]

Lo Bianco, J. (2000). O*ne literacy... or double power.* **Melbourne, Australia: Language Australia Ltd.**
Argues recent Australian language and literacy policies constitute privilege 'elite' language programs (e.g. foreign and second language programs), and marginalize others - e.g., Aboriginal, ESL and community language programs. Suggests such policies are motivated by the desire to raise levels of national performance on standardized international tests, widely viewed as indicators of economic competetiveness.

Asserts need for greater 'policy literacy', and advocates for an 'Australian Literacies' approach that reflects the multiple codes, diverse modes, and plural meanings of literate practice in contemporary Australia. [CE]

Lo Bianco, J. & Freebody, P. (eds.) (2001). *Australian literacies: Informing national policy on literacy education.* **Melbourne, Australia: Language Australia Ltd.**
Presents various perspectives to inform national policy on literacy education in Australia. Prefaces essays with a description of the general literacy crisis in Australia, highlighting the systematic underperformance of disadvantaged groups and individuals. Notes the need for strategies that respond to personal, civic-cultural, and economic needs. [ERIC]

Lo Bianco, J. & Wickert, R. (2001). *Australian policy activism in language and literacy.* **Melbourne, Australia: Language Australia Ltd.**
17 papers examine history and dynamics of language and literacy policy activism in Australia, from the perspective of those most deeply engaged. Describes how policies are developed, and effective ways of influencing the development process in different contexts. (More than 600 references) [Book jacket]

Searle, J., Wickert, R., Johnson, G. & Javed, S. (2002). *Scenarios for the future of adult literacy and numeracy policy, provision and research: Report on the ALNARC online forum 15 March - 19 April 2002.* **Brisbane, Australia: Adult Literacy and Numeracy Australian Research Consortium, Griffith University.**
Discusses outcomes of an online forum in response to two research questions: (1) what are the future scenarios for adult literacy and numeracy in contexts where notions of skills and knowledge are rapidly transforming?; and (2) what are the implications of these scenarios for future adult literacy and numeracy policy, practice and research in Australia?. [CE]

Smolicz, J.J. & Secombe, M.J. (2003). Assimilation or pluralism? Changing policies for minority languages education in Australia. *Language Policy* **2(1), 3-25.**
Traces effects on Australian language policy of a changing sociolinguistic situation -- increasing multilingualism -- and a weakening of a monolingual ideology. Analyzes country's emergence from an assimilationist past to a more multicultural approach with special reference to young Cambodians. Shows the vital importance of school support for minority language literacy and students' subsequent professional advancement. [ERIC]

CANADA

Antone, E. (2003). *Culturally framing aboriginal literacy and learning. Canadian Journal of Native Education* **27(1), 7-15.**
Explains that, beyond the development of reading and writing skills, Aboriginal literacy is a wholistic concept, with spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional aspects, that integrates relationships between self, community, nation, and creation.. [ERIC]

Battell, E. (2001). *Naming the magic: Non-academic outcomes in basic literacy.* **Victoria, BC: Ministry of Advanced Education.**
Presents six techniques, drafted by forty basic literacy instructors, for documenting non-academic changes that may occur in the lives of learners as a result of literacy instruction. Documents the difficulties encountered and lessons learned during field-testing these techniques, and identifies recommendations for a more extensive and focused study of non-academic outcomes. [Author]

Blunt, A. (1998). *Human capital versus market signaling theory: The case with adult literacy.* **Retrieved June 15, 2004 from the University of British Columbia, Department of Educational Studies, Adult Education and Research Conference web site: edst.educ.ubc.ca /aerc/1998/98blunt.htm.**
Interprets data from the Statistics Canada Survey of Literacy Skills Used in Daily Activities (LSUDA, 1990) from the different perspectives of human capital and market signaling theory. Presents the implications of these findings for policy and practice. [Author]

Blunt, A. (2004). *Literacy discourse analysis: Making space at the policy table.* **Adult Basic Education 14(1), 3-17.** Explains how discourse analysis can reveal how meanings of literacy are socially produced, communicated, and mediated. Analyses a National Literacy Secretariat consultation with university-level teacher-education and adult education researchers, to demonstrate how the outcomes were influenced by the discourses of participants and organizers. [Author]

Darville, R. (2002). *Policy, accountability and practice in adult literacy work: Sketching an institutional ethnography.* **Retrieved June 19, 2004 from the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education, Annual Conference Archives web site: www.oise. utoronto.ca/CASAE/cnf2002/2002_Pa pers/darville2002w.pdf.**
Investigates the relationship between policy and accountability and practice,

highlighting the perpetual clash between conceptions of literacy at the policy level versus the socially-constructed character of 'literacy' in daily life. CE]

Echenberg, H. (2003, June-July). *Fifty years of social policy: Playing "hide and seek" with villains and heroes* **[Electronic version]. Policy Options 24(6), 45-50. Retrieved June 17, 2004 from www.irpp.org/po/**
Reviews Canada's social policy development under the six full-term prime ministers in last 50 years. Presents a policy analysis framework that identifies three elements required to effect change in public policy. [CE]

Folinsbee, S. (2001). *Briefing paper: Literacy and the Canadian workforce.* **Retrieved June 15, 2004 from the Movement for Canadian Literacy web site: www.literacy.ca /public/brief/cover.htm.**
Summarizes major issues and trends that impact on literacy and the Canadian workforce, based on findings and recommendations from the 2000 National Summit on Literacy and Productivity, key informant interviews, and a review of the literature on literacy and work. (25 references) [CE]

Government of Canada response to: "Raising adult literacy skills: The need for a Pan-Canadian response". (2003). **Retrieved June 2004, from the Government of Canada web site dsp-psd.communication.gc.ca Collection/RH64-25-2003E.pdf.**
Reviews the context for the government's response, and affirms the importance of literacy as the foundation for learning and participation in a knowledge-based economy and society. Describes current national, provincial and communtiy efforts to address the problem of low literacy, and presents the government's response to the Standing Committee's report on literacy. [CE]

Human Resources Development Canada. (2002). *Knowledge matters: Skills and learning for Canadians.* **Retrieved June 15, 2004 from the Government of Canada, Innovation in Canada web site: www11.sdc.gc.ca/sl-ca/doc/toc.shtml.**
Describes skills and learning challenges Canada will face in the 21st century, and proposes a series of national goals and milestones against which progress may be measured over time. [ERIC]

Human Resources Development Canada. (2002). *National summit on innovation and learning: Summary.* **Retrieved June 9, 2004 from the Innovation in Canada web site: innovation.gc.ca/gol/innovation/interf ace.nsf/vSSGBasic/in02181e.htm.**
Summarizes the objectives, proceedings, and major outcomes of a national

summit meeting to determine the strategic priorities and actions of Canada's Innovation Strategy. More than 500 people from the private sector, non-government organizations, academia and government of Canada participated. [Executive Summary]

Industry Canada. (2001). *Achieving excellence: Investing in people, knowledge and opportunity.* **Retrieved June 15, 2004 from the Government of Canada, Innovation in Canada web site: innovationstrategy .gc.ca/gol/innovation/interface.nsf/ vSSGBasic/in04142e.htm.**
Reviews Canada's performance in a 21st-century world driven by innovation, and discusses the challenges ahead. Describes past programs to foster innovation in Canada, and proposes a collaborative Innovation Strategy to reduce gaps between Canada and other industrialized countries. Presents federal goals, targets and priorities. [ERIC]

Joint Accord Table of the Voluntary Sector Initiative. (2002). A code of good practice on policy dialogue. **Retrieved June 15, 2004 from the Voluntary Sector Initiative web site: www.vsiisbc.ca/eng/policy/ policy_code.cfm.**
Fulfills the Accord's commitment to put its provisions into action, by deepening the dialogue between the Government of Canada and the voluntary sector at various stages of the public policy process. Presents the principles underpinning the Code, describes the public policy process, and outlines good practices for the Government of Canada and the voluntary sector. [Intro]

Kapsalis, C. (2001). *Catching up with the Swedes: Probing the Canada-Sweden literacy gap.* **Retrieved June 7, 2004 from the National Literacy Secretariat web site: www.nald.ca /NLS/inpub/sweden/cover.htm.**
Describes a study that sought to determine what factors account for the wide Canada-Sweden literacy gap, and what lessons Canada might learn from such a comparison. Highlights cultural factors that contribute to Sweden's high literacy skills. Makes several,policy recommendations. (12 references) [ERIC]

Movement for Canadian Literacy. (2002). *Building a Pan-Canadian strategy on literacy and essential skills: Recommendations for the federal government.* **Retrieved June 9, 2004 from www.literacy.ca/govrel/ building/cover.htm.**
Calls for the federal government to take a leadership role in developing a cooperative, Pan-Canadian strategy on literacy and essential skills. Suggests some guiding principles. Outlines twelve recommendations. [CE]

Movement for Canadian Literacy. (2002). *Literacy matters: Why Canada should make adult literacy and essential skills a policy and funding priority.* **Retrieved June 9, 2004 from** www.literacy.ca/govrel/matters/cover.htm.
Describes the literacy challenges faced by Canadian society, and elaborates on the social and economic benefits to be gained by prioritizing federal investment in literacy. Stresses need for a Pan-Canadian Literacy and Essential Skills Strategy, and makes five recommendations for action. [CE]

Movement for Canadian Literacy. (2003). *MCL's initial analysis of the Government reponse to the report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and the Status of Person's with Disabilities.* **Retrieved June 20, 2004 from** www.literacy.ca/govrel/response.htm.
Analyzes Federal Government response to Standing Committee report, and frames MCL's reactions (positive and negative) within the context of political transition and uncertainty. [CE]

Movement for Canadian Literacy, Learners' Advisory Network. (2003). *Report: Adult learners, what do you think?* **Retrieved June 9, 2004 from** www.literacy.ca/lan/youthink/report.htm.
Summarizes the reponses of 150 adult learners, from 10 regions of Canada, who responded to an MCL survey about the role of literacy in their lives. [CE]

National Aboriginal Design Committee. (2002). *Position paper on aboriginal literacy.* **Retrieved June 20, 2004 from the National Adult Literacy Database web site:** www.nald.ca/fulltext/position/cover.htm.
Summarizes key themes, issues and recommendations of Aboriginal literacy practitioners, emerging from gatherings and consultations over six years. Recommends the Government of Canada develop a comprehensive policy on Aboriginal adult literacy, numeracy and life skills and promote policies and funding levels commensurate with the disadvantages faced by Aboriginal Peoples in Canada. [CE]

Quigley, A.B. & Norton, M. (2002). *"It simply makes us better": Learning from literacy research in practice networks in the UK, Australia and the United States: A resource for literacy research in practice in Canada.* **Retrieved June 18, 2004 from** www.nald.ca/ripal/Resourcs/simply/english/cover.htm.
Surveys the structures and practices of 11 adult literacy practitioner research networks in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and Canada. (18 references) [ERIC]

Rubenson, K. (2002). *Lifelong learning for all: Challenges and limitations of public policy.* **Retrieved June 19, 2004 from the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education, Annual Conference Archives web site:** www.oise.utoronto.ca/CASAE/cnf2002/2002_Papers/rubenson2002w.pdf
Provides a critical examination of the role public policy can or ought to play, in the face of broad promises by 'lifelong learning' to solve economic and social problems in the industrialized world. Considers the dilemma that the concept may be so broad (and so focused on the individual), that it risks losing sight of broader public policy issues and concerns. [Author] (6 references)

Scott, K. (2003). *Funding matters: The impact of Canada's new funding regime on nonprofit and voluntary organizations: Summary report.* **Retrieved June 8, 2004 from the Canadian Council on Social Development web site:** www.ccsd.ca/pubs/2003/fm/index.htm.
Describes the changing funding landscape in Canada, and presents findings of a national study into the impacts of these changes on the financial capacity and long-term sustability of nonprofit and voluntary organizations. Suggests current trends in funding threaten the continued viability of the sector, since much organizational time is now devoted to chasing short-term sources of funding, at the expense of organizations' missions and core activities. (13 references) [Summary]

Sussman, S.B. (2003). *Moving the markers: New perspectives on adult literacy rates in Canada.* **Retrieved June 19, 2004 from the Movement for Canadian Literacy web site:** www.literacy.ca/public/moving/moving.pdf.
Investigates how Canadian adult literacy statistics are used in development of adult literacy policies and programs, and discusses technical and conceptual limitations of existing methods for developing literacy rate statistics.. Makes 26 recommendations for action and collaboration among policy makers and the literacy community. [CE]

Tuijnman, A. (2001). *Benchmarking adult literacy in America: An international comparative study.* **Retrieved June 20, 2004 from the National Adult Literacy Database web site:** www.nald.ca/fulltext/Benchmrk/cover.htm.
Presents summary findings of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) from 21 countries; and identifies 10 indicators that allow comparison of Americans' literacy proficiency with that of other populations. [ERIC]

IRELAND

A strategy for the way forward: The National Adult Literacy Agency's response to the white paper on adult education Learning for Life. **(2001). Dublin, Ireland: National Adult Literacy Agency.**
Contains NALA's response to Ireland's first white paper on adult education: Learning for Life (2000). Briefly describes the historic and strategic context of adult literacy in Ireland. Identifies issues of concern to NALA members. Presents proposals to address these concerns. [CE]

Ireland. Department of Education and Science. (2000). *Learning for Life: White paper on adult education.* **Retrieved June 15, 2004 from** www.education.ie/servlet/blobservlet/fe_adulted_wp.pdf.
Reviews role and status of adult education in Irish society, and discusses trends in educational participation. Presents guiding principles for adult education in Ireland. Proposes specific policies aimed at expanding the flexibility and supply of core programs and services. (72 references) [ERIC]

McCauley, F. (2000). *The white paper on adult education: Learning for life: Synopsis, analysis of recom-mendations, issues for AONTAS.* **Retrieved June 7, 2004 from the AONTAS web site:** www.aontas.com/download/pdf/analysis.pdf.
Detailed summary and analysis, by the Irish National Association of Adult Education (AONTAS), of the priorities and recommendations outlined in the government white paper on adult education. [CE]

NEW ZEALAND

Johnson, A.H. (2000). *Changing skills for a changing world: Recom-mendations for adult literacy policy in Aotearoa/New Zealand.* **[Occasional Paper Series]. Retrieved June 10, 2004 from the New Zealand, Department of Labour web site:** www.dol.govt.nz/publication-view.asp?ID=41.
Summarizes issues facing New Zealand's adult literacy movement, in context of rapidly changing skill demands for the 21st century. Describes the current political, economic and social climate, and reviews the issues and structures that have contributed to its creation. Offers recommendations for a comprehensive and coordinated long-term adult literacy strategy. (93 references) [ERIC]

King, C.M., Jonson, K., Whitehead, D. & Reinken, B.J. (2003). *Glimpses of literacy education in New Zealand.* Retrieved June 10, 2004 from the Reading Online web site: www.readingonline.org/international/inter_index.asp?HREF=/international/king/.
Reports observations of a team of U.S. educators that toured New Zealand primary schools to investigate factors contributing to the country's impressively high literacy rates. Describes the New Zealand literacy framework, and offers a view into the country's print-rich classrooms. (6 references) [ERIC]

Limbrick, L. (1999). *The literacy debates: What are the issues in New Zealand.* Retrieved June 9, 2004 from the EducatiOn-line database: www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00001367.htm.
Describes response to recent surveys and assessments that show declining literacy levels in a country frequently praised for past literacy performance.. Addresses issues on Maori language and literacy instruction, briefly identifies strategies emerging from Taskforce recommendations. (7 references) [CE]

New Zealand. Ministry of Education. (2001). *More than words: The New Zealand adult literacy strategy.* Retrieved June 19, 2004 from www.minedu.govt.nz/web/downloadable/dl6494_v1/final-als-for-web.pdf.
Describes New Zealand's new strategy to improve literacy rates in English and Te Reo Maori, to ensure that all adults have the skills to participate in all aspects of life, including work, family and the community. Discusses the role of government, and presents a plan for implementation. [Summary]

New Zealand. Ministry of Education. (2004). *Adult & community education - policy reform: Towards a learning society.* Retrieved June 19, 2004 from www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=8456&indexid=1216&indexparentid=1028.
Introduces New Zealand's plans to reform adult and community education, within the context of wider reforms in tertiary education. Outlines new approaches to funding and resourcing adult and community education, to strengthen the sector, remove impediments to access, improve school provision, improve outcomes for adults. [Introduction]

UNITED KINGDOM

Belanger, P. & Tuijnman, A. (eds.) (1997). *New patterns of adult learning: A six country comparative study.* Oxford, UK: Elsevier Science.
10 papers provide empirical comparative analysis of multiple factors that explain variations in patterns of adult education participation in six countries, based on findings from the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS). Argue successful interventions will depend on knowledge base of adult education and understanding factors on participation and non-participation. [CE]

Crowther, J. (2003). *Accounting and accountability in adult and community education: Reflections on the Scottish experience.* Retrieved June 15, 2004 from the EducatiOn-line database: www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00003092.htm.
Discusses changing language of adult and community education in Scotland as a result of its incorporation into the managerial politics of the state. Presents incorporation as a trend, in which the language of lifelong learning plays a key role in mediating the political economy of capitalist globalisation and restructuring welfare. [Author]

Crowther, J., Hamilton, M. & Tett, L. (eds.) (2001). *Powerful literacies.* Leicester, UK: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education.
15 papers provide international perspectives on how to promote and employ literacy as a tool for challenging inequality and dependency. Essays on broad range of issues include: 'new literacies'; homelessness in Australia; learning disabilities; form-filling; ABET in South Africa; democracy and citizenship; power-sharing in programs; and multiple literacies in East London, [CE]

Derrick, J. (2002). *What could a socio-cultural approach to literacy, numeracy and ESOL practice be, and how does this align to current practice?* Retrieved June 4, 2004 from the University of Edinburgh, Moray House School of Education, ESRC Adult Basic Education Seminar Series web site: www.education.ed.ac.uk/hce/ABE-seminars/papers/ABE1-JayDerrick.pdf.
Discusses significance of England's national performance measurement systems to program-level practices in Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL (LNE), and assesses the extent to which the current adult education framework supports socio-cultural approaches to instruction and assessment. Other models underscore the principles and experiences that demand a more socio-cultural approach to LNE provision and performance measurement. [CE]

Derrick, J. (2002). *A socio-cultural approach to literacy, numeracy and ESOL practice: A practice perspective.* Retrieved June 4, 2004 from the University of Edinburgh, Moray House School of Education, ESRC Adult Basic Education Seminar Series web site: www.education.ed.ac.uk/hce/ABE-seminars/papers/ABE1-JayDerrick2.pdf.
Addresses current lack of research on effects of different-level funding and performance measurement systems on Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL (LNE) practice in England; and suggests that a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between policy and practice must investigate the impacts of these systems. (5 references) [CE]

Goldstein, H. (2004). *Education For All: The globalization of learning targets. Comparative Education (to appear 2004).* Retrieved June 4, 2004 from: www.mlwin.com/hgpersonal/Education%20for%20all.pdf.
Argues ambitious UNESCO programme "Education For All," launched in 1990, could be seriously undermined by reliance on achievement of numerical 'targets'. Evidence from existing attempts by countries to impose educational targets reveals undesirable side effects and distortions of educational systems. Explores some possible consequences of UNESCO's adherence to such targets. [Author]

Hamilton, M. (2001). *Commentary on the NFER research report: Progress in adult literacy.* Retrieved June 10, 2004 from the National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education web site: www.niace.org.uk/Organisation/advocacy/adultliteracy.pdf.
Identifies and discusses flaws in the research design, methodology and analysis of findings from an evaluative study by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) into the progress of adults enrolled in literacy courses. Suggests the study has some value as a pilot, and describes key elements and variables to be considered in future projects. [CE]

Hamilton, M. (2001). *Privileged literacies: Policy, institutional process and the life of the IALS.* Language and Education 15(2-3), 178-96.
Argues that to make use of the theoretical insights offered by the New Literacy Studies, more needs to be understood about how institutions produce and privilege certain kinds of knowing, and devalue or redefine the local and vernacular for their own purposes. The International Adult Literacy Survey is used to demonstrate how a powerful discourse develops and can organize our knowledge and literacy. [ERIC]

Improving literacy and numeracy: A fresh start: The report of the working group chaired by Sir Claus Moser. (1999). Retrieved June 15, 2004 from the Department for Education and Skills web site: www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/mosergroup/index.htm.
Reviews the scale of the literacy and numeracy problem in England, and proposes a new National Strategy for Adult Basic Skills based on ten key elements. Delivers twenty-one focussed recommendations, and an implementation plan. (38 references) [ERIC]

Lo Bianco, J. (2001). *Language and literacy policy in Scotland.* Retrieved June 19, 2004 from the Scottish Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research web site: www.scilt.stir.ac.uk/pubs.htm#083.
Assesses current language policy issues in Scotland, based on consultation on the SCOTLANG Project. Examines international language policy developments, and analyzes the current Scottish framework and mechanisms. Recommends ways to achieve more integrated policy that addresses multiple issues. [CE]

Schuller, T., Brassett-Grundy, A., Green, A., Hammond, C. & Preston, J. (2002). *Learning, continuity and change in adult life.* Retrieved June 18, 2004 from the Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning web site: www.learningbenefits.net/.
Examines relationship between learning, continuity and change in adult life, based on 140 in-depth biographical interviews with adult learners in 3 regions of England. Advises policymakers to give greater recognition to sustaining benefits of education in personal lives, families, and society. (23 references) [ERIC]

UNITED STATES

Alamprese, J.A. (1998). *Promoting systemic change in adult education.* Retrieved June 20, 2004 from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult Career and Vocational Education web site: www.cete.org/acve/mp_alamprese_01.asp.
Discusses state approaches to adult education reform driven by demand for accountability and high-quality services among legislative and other bodies. Presents framework for 'systemic change', and identifies four needs to be considered by state policymakers. Describes conditions that influence change strategies; highlights importance of standards for learner performance, assessment, data collection and use, and funding. (25 references) [ERIC]

Beder, H. (1999). *The outcomes and impacts of adult literacy education in the United States.* Retrieved June 20, 2004 from the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy web site: www.gse.harvard.edu/~ncsall/research/report6.pdf.
Assesses outcomes and impacts of adult literacy education in the United States, based on research since the late 1960s. Recommends establishment of a national reporting system that will: measure the outcomes and impacts of adult literacy education; allow for longitudinal evaluation; and promote the systematic funding and improvement of state and local outcome studies. (90 references) [ERIC]

Belzer, A. (2003). *Living with it: Federal policy implementation in adult basic education: The cases of the Workforce Investment Act and Welfare Reform.* [NCSALL Reports #24]. Retrieved June 19, 2004 from the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy web site: www.gse.harvard.edu/~ncsall/research/report24.pdf.
Reports findings of a qualitative, interview-based study to identify impacts of two pieces of federal legislation on the content and delivery of adult basic education in the U.S.:Offers specific policy, practice and research recommendations to improve and clarify policies and implementation. [CE]

Chisman, F.P. (2002). *Leading from the middle: The state role in adult education & literacy.* Retrieved June 10, 2004 from the Council for the Advancement of Adult Literacy web site: www.caalusa.org/leadingfrommiddle.pdf
Examines the role of state government in an intergovernmental adult education and literacy (AEL) system, and describes how many of the system's funding, administrative, implementation and policy mechanisms converge at state level. Explores the issues, implications, and limits of state power and capacity with regard to: administration, governance and policy leadership. [CE]

Comings, J., Reder, S. & Sum, A. (2001). *Building a level playing field: The need to expand and improve the national and state adult education and literacy systems.* Retrieved June 15, 2004 from the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy web site: www.gse.harvard.edu/~ncsall/research/op_comings2.pdf
Argues for improved and expanded adult education and literacy services, emphasizing growing importance of strong basic skills to success as workers, family members, and citizens. Highlights three priorities: increase resources, increase access, and improve instruction. -Presents the 2000 report, "From the Margins to the Mainstream,"

as possible blueprint. (27 references) [ERIC]

D'Amico, D. (1999). *Politics, policy, practice and personal responsibility: Adult education in an era of welfare reform.* [NCSALL Reports #10A]. Retrieved June 19, 2004 from the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy web site: gse.harvard.edu/~ncsall/research/d'amico1.pdf
Suggests relationship of literacy to work be considered in terms of political and economic conditions that structure the experiences of the working and non-working poor. Argues welfare dependency is a problem of labor market structure, and welfare-to-work programs fail to address class, race, and gender dynamics that hinder access to education and job opportunities. (39 references) [ERIC]

Imel, S. (1998). *Work force education or literacy development: Which road should adult education take?* [ERIC Digest No. 193]. Retrieved June 10, 2004 from www.cete.org/acve/docgen.asp?tbl=digests&ID=46.
Examines current debates around adult education field in light of growing emphasis on workforce development as a policy goal. Cites research evidence that suggests welfare-to-work programs rarely focus on developing transferable skills needed to achieve true employment self-sufficiency. Reframes the debate to inquire whether adult education can successfully combine literacy development and workforce education, and presents two programs that have succeeded. (12 references) [ERIC]

Istance, D., Schuetze, H.G. & Schuller, T. (eds.) (2002). *International perspectives on lifelong learning: From recurrent education to the knowledge society.* Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.
Traces progress in developing lifelong learning policies over the past 30 years, and examines current challenges to lifelong learning policymakers. All papers include bibliographies. [ERIC]

Kruidenier, J. (2002). *Research-based principles for adult basic education: Reading instruction.* Retrieved July 9, 2004 from the Partnership for Reading web site: www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/adult_ed_02.pdf.
Introduces Partnership for Reading initiative, and reports findings of a panel of reading experts convened to identify and evaluate existing research in adult literacy reading instruction, and to summarize scientifically-based principles and practices. Describes methodology and criteria for selecting studies. Summarizes results,

recommends agenda for further research. [CE]

Literacy Assistance Center. (Spring 2001). *Leadership in an era of change* [Electronic version]. Literacy Harvest. Retrieved June 20, 2004 from www.lacnyc.org/publications/ Harvest/01fall/LiteracyHarvestFall2001.pdf.
A special issue of a professional journal of the New York Literacy Assistance Center, focuses on changes created by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), and implications. Contains perspectives of program managers, local policymakers, and other leaders on new accountability requirements. [Editorial]

Merrifield, J. (1998). *Contested ground: Performance accountability in adult basic education.* [NCSALL Reports #1]. Retrieved June 16, 2004 from the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy web site: www.gse.harvard.edu /~ncsall/research/report1.pdf.
Addresses increasing demands for performance accountability in adult basic education (ABE), in current context of global economic restructuring, changes in work and employment and large-scale immigration to the United States. Highlights new state and national initiatives that address issues of performance and accountability, and proposes principles for a framework for action. [ERIC]

Murphy, G. & Heitner, B. (2002). *Federal role in adult literacy: FY 2002.* [CAAL Bulletin 1]. Retrieved June 10, 2004 from www.caalusa. org/federalrole2002.pdf.
Provides a descriptive compilation of government programs, for the financial year 2002, that fund adult literacy programs and activities in the United States. [CE]

National Coalition for Literacy. (2003). *Omnibus literacy legislation concept paper: Implementing the National Literacy Summit Initiative Action Agenda: Suggested legislative measures.* Retrieved June 10, 2004 from www.national-coalition-literacy.org/reports/oll_concept_final.pdf
Outlines recommendations for reauthorization of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of WIA (the Workforce Investment Act). Recommends legislative measures that will help realize the consensus goal reached at the 2000 National Literacy Summit.[CE]

National Literacy Summit 2000 Steering Committee. (2000). *From the margins to the mainstream: An action agenda for literacy.* Retrieved June 4, 2004 from the National Institute for Literacy web site: www.nifl.gov/nifl/archive/ margins_to_mainstream.pdf.
Proposes plan of action to help the United States meet its literacy challenges. Issues call for action based on a review of the national literacy problem, as revealed by 1993 National Adult Literacy Survey. Outlines an action agenda built around three key priorities: resources, access, and quality. Recommends specific actions for state- and community-based stakeholders and partners. [ERIC]

Reading and literacy in America [Electronic version]. (2003). ETS Policy Notes 11(2). Retrieved June 20, 2004 from www.ets.org/research /pic/readingpn.pdf
Reviews state of reading and literacy in the U.S., from kindergarten through adulthood, based on findings from National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), OECD Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), and National Adult Literacy Survey. (13 references) [ERIC]

Reddy, L. (2001). *A national plan for research and development in adult education and literacy.* Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.
Presents a national plan for research and development (R&D) in adult education and literacy, as developed by the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) through a consultative process. Proposes a model for linking research to improvements in policy and practice. [ERIC]

Stein, S.G. (1995). *Equipped for the Future: A customer-driven vision for adult literacy and lifelong learning.* Retrieved June 18, 2004 from the National Institute for Literacy, Equipped for the Future web site: www.nifl.gov/lincs/collections/eff/ archive/content.htm.
Reports findings of a two-year effort to solicit and analyze adult learners' perspectives on the meaning of Goal 6 of the U.S. National Education Goals (1989). Synthesizes responses of more than 1500 adult students.Provides samples of students' reflections on what it means to be literate; what it means to compete in a global economy; and more. [ERIC]

Stein, S.G. (1997). *Equipped for the Future: A reform agenda for adult literacy and lifelong learning.* Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.
Examines U.S. adult literacy and basic education system, discusses shortcomings, and explains principles and evidence behind National Institute for Literacy's (NIFL) system reform agenda, Equipped for the Future (EFF). Presents the three EFF 'role maps' as parents, citizens, and workers, and explains their benefit in defining areas of responsibility and related activities. (9 references) [CE]

Sticht, T. (1998). *Moving adult literacy education from the margins to the mainstream of educational policy and practice.* [Adult Learning & Literacy: A Series of Occasional Papers 1]. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED429235).
Describes the marginalized status of the adult literacy education sector in the U.S., in comparison to mainstream K-12, college and university education systems. Calls for increased support and a central role for the sector in national reform activities, highlighting the multiplier effect of investing in quality adult literacy education: (10 references) [ERIC]

Sticht, T. (2001). *The power of adult education: Moving the adult education and literacy system of the United States from the margins to the mainstream of education.* Retrieved June 4, 2004, from the National Adult Literacy Database web site: www.nald.ca/fulltext/sticht /power/cover.htm.
Reviews record of government contributions to the Adult Education and Literacy System (AELS) from 1966 to 1998. Argues investments in adult learning perform 'double duty', by generating additional outcomes such as increased productivity at work, home and in the community; increased self-confidence; improved family health; and lower rates of criminal recidivism. [ERIC]

Sticht, T.G. (1998). *Beyond 2000: Future directions for adult education. U.S. Department of Education. Office of Vocational and Adult Education. Division of Adult Education and Literacy.* Retrieved June 15, 2004 from the National Adult Literacy Database web site: www.nald.ca/fulltext/beyond/ cover.htm.
Provides adult educators information they can use to develop their own perspectives on the future of adult education (AE). Offers a historical overview of AE from the mid-1960s to the present, revealing trends in funding and participation among certain segments of the adult population. [ERIC]

Sticht, T.G. (2000). *Are we facing a "literacy surplus" in the workforces of the United States and Canada?* [Research note]. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED455392).
Challenges prominent Canadian and U.S. concern that demand for skilled workers far exceeds current supply. Cites, among others, a Hudson Institute study that reports 65-75 % of new jobs in fastest-growing occupations will require language and mathematics skills at or below eighth-grade level. Presents recent evidence that supports possibilityof literacy 'surplus'. Stresses need for policy to emphasize many benefits of adult education beyond

workplace readiness, and raise efforts to research and document these benefits. [ERIC]

Tuijnman, A.C., Kirsch, I.S. & Wagner, D.A. (Eds.). (1997). *Adult basic skills: Innovations in measurement and policy analysis.* Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
13 papers examine innovations in the measurement of adult literacy and basic skills, and in the analysis of policies.(References included in each chapter) [ERI

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education. (2003). *A blueprint for preparing America's future. The Adult Basic and Literacy Education Act of 2003: Summary of major provisions.* Retrieved June 7, 2004 from www.ed.gov/policy/adulted/leg/aeblueprint2.doc.
Outlines the Bush administration's vision for adult basic and literacy education, under reauthorization of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA [ERIC]

EUROPE

Behringer, F. & Coles, M. (2003). *The role of national qualifications systems in promoting lifelong learning: Towards an understanding of the mechanisms that link qualifications and lifelong learning.* [OECD Education Working Paper No. 3]. Retrieved June 20, 2004 from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development web site: www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/11/15520534.pdf.
Reports the findings of an OECD project that investigated how national qualifications systems influence the volume, distribution and quality of lifelong learning (LLL) in OECD countries. Provides a knowledge base to assist policy makers in shaping qualifications systems to promote lifelong learning, while recognizing the complexity of the field of enquiry. [Introduction]

Bostrom, A.K., Boudard, E. & Siminou, P. (2001). *Lifelong learning in Sweden: The extent to which vocational education and training policy is nurturing lifelong learning in Sweden.* Retrieved June 15, 2004 from the CEDEFOP European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training web site: www2.trainingvillage.gr/download/publication/panorama/5112en.pdf.
Examines position of lifelong learning within Sweden's vocational education and training (VET) system and policies. Provides examples of lifelong learning policy, and finds active support, within the VET framework, for the development of a lifelong learning system. [Similar

analyses of several other countries can be found on the European Training Village web site.] (42 references) [ERIC]

Cervero, R.M. (2001). *Walkabout: On the nature of practice in a lifelong learning world.* Retrieved June 9, 2004 from the EducatiOn-line database: www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00002558.htm.
Examines the international emergence of the term 'lifelong learning' and explores the practical, political and theoretical implications that attend its supplanting of the term 'adult education'. Illustrates how this represents a significant shift in how the discourse around lifelong learning has (re)constituted itself through the 1990's. (13 references) [CE]

Commission of the European Communities. (2000). *A memorandum on lifelong learning: Commission staff working paper.* Retrieved June 18, 2004 from the European Commission, Education, Training and Youth web site: europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lll/life/memoen.pdf
States the case for lifelong learning, and argues for the equal valuation and promotion of active citizenship and employability as interrelated aims of lifelong learning. Calls for a new approach to education and training in light of current economic and social changes in Europe; and promotes Lifelong Learning as the umbrella that can unite different kinds of teaching and learning. [CE]

Commission of the European Communities. (2001). *Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality.* Retrieved June 19, 2004 from the European Commission, Education, Training and Youth web site: europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lll/life/communication/com_en.pdf.
Reports outcomes of a Europe-wide consultation to 'identify coherent strategies and practical measures with a view to fostering lifelong learning for all,' in response to the European Commission's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning. Outlines priorities for action and examines ways to propel the European agenda on lifelong learning. [CE]

Commission of the European Communities. (2002). *Lifelong learning practice and indicators: Commission staff working document.* Retrieved June 18, 2004 from the European Commission, Education, Training and Youth web site: europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lll/life/communication/staff_en.pdf.
Revisits the context for Europe-wide consultations on lifelong learning, and follows up with concrete

demonstrations/examples of the different ways in which EC member countries have implemented strategies and initiatives in lifelong learning. [CE]

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2003). *Beyond rhetoric: Adult learning policies and practices.* Retrieved June 19, 2004 from www.oecd.org/dataoecd/18/57/18466358.pdf
Identifies effective adult education policies and practices, based on relevant examples from Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. (163 references) [ERIC]

INTERNATIONAL

Rogers, A. (2002). *Re-thinking adult literacy and post-literacy from an international perspective: The Roby Kidd memorial lecture.* Rutland, UK: Uppingham Press.
Summarizes contemporary understandings of adult literacy in context of development. Presents perspective that: literacy is best seen as one among many communication skills, rather than the single essential skill; literacy learning is not indispensible to development (many non-literate persons are fully engaged in development activities); resolving issues of access may be more important than the universal development of such skills; most adult literacy programs have failed to help the participants use their new skills in their everyday life (28 references) [ERIC]

The Hamburg Declaration: The agenda for the future. Fifth International Conference on Adult Education. CONFINTEA. (1997). Retrieved June 20, 2004 from the UNESCO, Institute for Education web site: www.unesco.org/education/uie/confintea/pdf/con5eng.pdf.
Serves as foundation for much current discourse on adult and lifelong learning. Presents 27 resolutions by representatives of governments and organizations at the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education in 1997. Recognizes adult learning as a fundamental human right; calls on UNESCO to play a lead role in promoting adult education as an integral part of the learning system. [CE]

RESOURCES: ANNOTATED WEB SITES

AUSTRALIA

Adult Literacy and Numeracy Australian Research Consortium (ALNARC)
www.staff.vu.edu.au/alnarc/

ALNARC represents a national collaboration between five university-based research centres built on a research management model designed to respond to state needs. Activities promote the development of a 'visible culture' of research in Australian adult literacy and numeracy - including research conversations, increased documentation of research projects, sponsoring practitioner researchers to investigate their own practice, and collaboration with state literacy and numeracy councils to foster debate about the links between research policy and provision. [Site text]

Council for Adult Education (CAE)
www.cae.edu.au

The CAE provides access to learning opportunities for the Victorian community through a wide range of programs and services designed to meet the continually changing needs of the adult learning population. Since the closure of Language Australia, the CAE hosted the operations of its Melbourne office, and taken over the distribution of its publications (www.caepress.edu.au). [CE]

Literacy and Numeracy - Australian Government, Department of Education, Science and Training
www.dest.gov.au/schools/LiteracyandNumeracy

Describes the Australian Government's commitment to literacy and numeracy as the cornerstones of all learning, and its priority to focus on achieving real sustained improvements in the literacy and numeracy skills of Australian children Includes links to the National Literacy and Numeracy Plan, national benchmarks, and information about funding, research projects, and relevant publications.

CANADA

Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE) - Adult Education and the Contested Terrain of Public Policy (21st Annual Conference)
www.oise.utoronto.ca/CASAE/cnf2002/cnf2002.html

Provides access to an extensive archive of papers prepared by presenters (57) and emerging from conference symposia (7) and roundtables (10). Core conference questions addressed: the impact on adult basic education of increasingly market-based policies; how the sector has been affected or influenced by such policies; and how it may respond or contribute to informed, alternative policy making. Archives of previous CASAE conference papers are also available. [CE]

Movement for Canadian Literacy - Government Relations
www.literacy.ca/govrel/govrel.htm

Highlights MCL's mission to inform both the federal government and general public about issues related to adult literacy in Canada. Provides links to several full-text reports and documents on federal literacy policy, as well as resources to aid and inform politicians, the literacy community, and election preparation activities. [Site text]

National Adult Literacy Database (NALD)
www.nald.ca

NALD is Canada's most comprehensive source of information about adult literacy programs, resources, services and activities throughout the country, and is host to an extensive collection of full-text literacy research and teaching resources, produced by adult literacy and basic education practitioners from every province. [CE]

National Literacy Secretariat (NLS) - Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)
www.nald.ca/nls.htm

The NLS is the primary source of Government funding for literacy research, promotion, professional development and materials development activities across Canada. It works in partnership with provinces, territories, other government departments, business and labour, the voluntary sector and non-governmental organizations to promote literacy as an essential component of a learning society, and build capacity to provide access to literacy services across the country. [Site text]

IRELAND

National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) - NALA Evolving Quality Framework for Adult Basic Education
www.nala.ie/nalaprojects/project/20020131164824.html

This link leads to Ireland's Evolving Quality Framework, a national plan to guide and improve the quality of service in Adult Basic Education (ABE). Explains the working structure of the Framework, and identifies the guiding principles and quality assurance and evaluation mechanisms upon which it is based. Provides links to specific project descriptions and resources, sources of research, training, and publications, and background information on the Framework and its Irish and international contexts. [CE]

AONTAS: The Irish National Association of Adult Education
www.aontas.com

A voluntary membership organization, comprising more than 500 statutory and voluntary providers of adult and community organizations, that promotes the development of a learning society through the provision of a comprehensive, high-quality, inclusive and accessible system of adult learning and education. Provides up-to-date information and publications on policy, issues of current discussion, research and various meetings and conferences in the Adult Education Sector. [Site text]

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand Literacy Portal
www.nzliteracyportal.org.nz

Provides access to key sources of information about projects, professional development, research, and policies relating to adult literacy in New Zealand and internationally. Subject links include: e-literacy; ESOL; learning disability; new literacies; Te Reo Maori; community; vocational; family; workplace; and youth. [CE]

UNITED KINGDOM

EducatiOn-line - University of Leeds
www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/

EducatiOn-line is a freely accessible database of the full text of conference papers, working papers and electronic literature which supports educational research, policy and practice. Includes papers presented by participants in several annual Standing Committees on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults (SCUTREA) conferences. [Homepage text]

Observatory of Basic Skills Policy, Practice and Research - Basic Skills Agency
www.basic-skills-observatory.co.uk

Provides information and updates about literacy, numeracy and language as they impact on everyone from early years to adult life, in England and Wales. Contains summaries of policies, initiatives and research that address key issues, and links to further publications and resources. [Site text]

Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA)
www.lsda.org.uk

The LSDA is a strategic national resource for the development of policy and practice in post-16 education and training in the UK. The site contains a wealth of information about current research and development, programmes and events in the adult education sector, and provides access to full-text publications and policy briefs that monitor and analyze developments that will have an impact on education and training. Links to several other idependent and government agencies of national significance. [Site text]

Read Write Plus
Department for Education and Skills (DfES)
www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/

This site is a central source of information and advice on the implementation of Skills for Life. Provides access to news, surveys, toolkits, tests, research, publications, and guides relating to the strategy, and links adult learners, employers, higher education students, jobseekers, parents, school governors, teachers and young people to other key sources of guidance and support. [CE]

Waytolearn.co.uk
Department for Education and Skills (DfES)
www.waytolearn.co.uk

This site is a key source of information and support for adults who want to return to learning in the UK. It is maintained by the Department for Education and Skills and partner organizations, and beyond identifying learning opportunities, provides information on local sources of guidance, financial support and childcare.

UNITED STATES

Division of Adult Education and Literacy
Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/index.html?src=oc

Provides information about federal and state adult basic education, adult secondary education and English language acquisition programs. Includes links to budget information, fact sheets, statistics, and relevant research on the following topics: mathematics in adult education and literacy; adult education and literacy standards and assessments; the General Educational Development (GED) test; English literacy and civics education; family literacy; people with disabilities; professional development; technology and distance learning; and work-based education. [Site text]

Equipped For the Future (EFF) Special Collection
National Institute for Literacy (NIFL)
eff.cls.utk.edu/resources/

Provides a single-point of access to EFF-related resources and expertise for practitioners, administrators and policy makers concerned with adult and family literacy education. Includes materials developed by EFF partners and other materials relevant to standards-based education and program improvement. [Site text]

Policy & Legislation Special Collection
National Institute for Literacy (NIFL)
www.nifl.gov/lincs/collections/policy/policy.html

Provides useful and up-to-date information on major legislation and policy-related issues in the literacy field. Subjects covered by the collection include: family & intergenerational literacy; learning disabilities; reading; statistics; welfare reform; and workforce education. [Site text]

EUROPE

European Commission: Education and Training
Lifelong Learning, Policy Areas
europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lll/lll_en.html

Describes the European Union's ten-year mission to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, and defines the role of lifelong learning in achieving this mission. Links to key documents and member state resolutions. [Site text]

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - Lifelong Learning and Sectors of Education
www.oecd.org/about/0,2337,en_2649_34509_1_1_1_1_37455,00.html

Serves as a portal into the OECD's work on both formal and informal learning, which examines systemic issues of the field, such as: foundations; outcomes; access and equity; resources; pathways; visibility and recognition; and policy co-ordination. Identifies the major education sectors as: early childhood education ; pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education; and adult learning. Provides links to key statistics, publications and documents, and country-specific information. [Site text]

INTERNATIONAL

Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO
National Literacy Policies
www.accu.or.jp/litdbase/policy/

This link provides access to a database of profiles that describe the organisational structures, policies and strategies of the national government literacy agencies of several Asian/Pacific countries. [Homepage]

United Nations Literacy Decade 2003 - 2012
portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=5000&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

Outlines the global aims and purposes of the U.N. Literacy Decade 2003-2012, and provides current news articles and information about events and celebrations emerging from the initiative. Provides full-text access to the U.N. Resolution that established the Decade, an International Plan of Action, and supporting background documents. Links to further resources on literacy (e.g., documents and publications, declarations and conventions, and statistics), and to other civil and U.N. agency programs and communications networks. [CE]

CONFERENCE LISTING

Local and National

LDAQ 31st Annual Conference
March 23 -25, 2006
Montreal, QC
Tel: (514) 847-1324 ext 27
Fax: (514) 281-5187
Website: www.aqeta.qc.ca
Email: congress@aqeta.qc.ca

Blue Metropolis Foundation
8th Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival
April 5 - 9, 2006
Montreal, QC
Tel: (514) 937-2538
Fax: (514) 932-1148
Website: www.blue-met-bleu.com/
Email: info@blue-met-bleu.com

Association of Teachers of English of Quebec
Springboards 2006
April 27-28, 2006
Montreal, QC
Tel: (514) 935-9352 ext 303
Website: www.qesnrecit.qc.ca

Canadian Society for Training and Development (CCSTD)
2006 Symposium
May 4 - 5, 2006
Calgary, AB
Tel: (416) 367-5900 ext 23
(1-866-257-4275)
Fax: (416) 367-1642
Website: www.cstd.ca
Email: programs@cstd.ca

Quebec Library Association
74th Annual Conference
May 5 – 6, 2006
Montreal, QC
Tel: (514) 989-5355
Fax: (514) 989-5492
Email: ayarrow@westmount.org

Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC)
The Learning Stampede
May 28 - 30, 2006
Calgary, AB
Tel: (613) 746-2222 ext 3115
Fax: (613) 746-6174
Website: http://www.conference.accc.ca/
Email: gmulhall@accc.ca

Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council Canada
Essential Skills Workshop 2006
June 7 – 9, 2006
University of Quebec at Montreal, Montreal, Canada
Tel: (514) 987-3000 ext 3308
Website: www.competencesessentielles.uqam.ca
Email: pa_jabou@education.concordia.ca

Canadian Library Association (CLA)
Annual Conference
June 14 - 17, 2006
Ottawa, ON
Tel: (613) 232-9625
Fax: (613) 563-9895
Website: http://www.cla.ca/conference/conference.htm
Email: info@cla.ca

International

National Workforce Association (NWA)
Annual Conference
December 2 - 6, 2005
St. Petersburg, FL, United States
Tel: (202) 842-4004
Fax: (202) 842-0449
Website: http://www.nwaonline.org

4th International Conference on Researching Work and Learning
December 11 - 14, 2005
Sydney, Australia
Tel: +61-2-9514-3826
Website: www.oval.uts.edu.au/rwl4
Email: rwl@welldone.com.au

Modern Language Association (MLA)
121st Annual Convention
December 27 - 30, 2005
Washington, DC, United States
Tel: (646) 576-5263
Fax: (646) 458-0030
Website: http://www.mla.org/
Email: convention@mla.org

BETT 2006 The Educational Technology Show
January 11 - 14, 2006
London, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)20 8339 7446
Fax: +44 (0)20 8339 7441
Website: www.bettshow.com
Email: education@emap.com

National Association for Bilingual/Miltilingual Education (NABE)
NABE 2006
January 18 - 21, 2006
Phoenix, AZ, United States
Tel: (202) 898-1829
Fax: (202) 789-2866
Website: http://www.nabe.org/
Email: nabe@nabe.org

Technology, Reading and Learning Disabilities (TRLD)
24th Annual International Conference
January 26 - 28, 2006
San Francisco, CA, United States
Tel: 1-888-594-1249
Website: http://www.trld.com

Reading Recovery Council of North America (RRCNA)
2006 National Reading Recovery and Early Literacy Conference
February 4 - 7, 2006
Columbus, OH, United States
Tel: (614) 310-READ (7323)
Fax: (614) 310-7345
Website: http://www.readingrecovery.org/

American Council on Education (ACE)
88th Annual Meeting
February 11 - 14, 2006
Los Angeles, CA, United States
Tel: (202) 939-9300
Fax: (202) 833-4760
Website: http://www.acenet.edu/meeting/

Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDAA)
43rd Annual International Conference
March 1 - 4, 2006
New Orleans, LA, United States
Tel: (412) 341-1515
Fax: (412) 344-0224
Website: http://www.ldaamerica.org
Email: info@ldaamerica.org

Teaching and Learning with Technologies Conference 2006
March 1 - 2, 2006
West Lafayette, IN, United States
Website: http://tlt.purdue.edu
Email: itap@purdue.edu

The Education Show
March 9 - 11, 2006
Birmingham, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 870 429 4580
Website: http://www.education-show.co.uk

We Learn: Women Expanding – Literacy Education Action Resource Network
3rd Annual (Net) Working Conference on Women & Literacy
March 10 – 11, 2006
Yale University, New Haven, CT, United States
Website: www.litwomen.org
Email: welearn@litwomen.org

TESOL
40th Annual International Convention
March 15 - 19, 2006
Tampa, FL, United States
Tel: (703) 836-0774
Fax: (703) 836-7864
Website: http://www.tesol.org/tesol2006
Email: conventions@tesol.org

CONFERENCE LISTING

National Center for Family Literacy
15th Annual National Conference
March 19 - 21, 2006
Louisville, KY, United States
Tel: (502) 584-1133
Website: http://www.famlit.org/
Email: conference@famlit.org

California State University Northridge (CSUN)
CSUN's 21st Annual International Conference
March 20 - 25, 2006
Los Angeles, CA, United States
Tel: (818) 677-2578
Fax: (818) 677-4929
Website: http://www.csun.edu/cod/
Email: ctrdis@csun.edu

Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education & Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (SITE, AACE)
SITE 2006 17th Annual International Conference
March 20 - 24, 2006
Orlando, FL, United States
Tel: (757) 623-7588
Fax: (703) 997-8760
Website: http://www.aace.org
Email: info@aace.org

National Council of Teachers of English (NTCE)
Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC)
2006 Annual Convention
March 22 - 25, 2006
Chicago, IL, United States
Tel: 1-800-369-6283
Fax: (217) 328-9645
Website: http://www.ncte.org
Email: public_info@ncte.org

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC)
Annual Meeting
March 31 - April 4, 2006
Chicago, IL, United States
Tel: (800) 621-7440, ext. 103
Website: http://www.ncahigherlearning commission.org/AnnualMeeting/
Email: annualmeeting@hlcommision.org

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
2006 Annual Conference
April 1 - 3, 2006
Chicago, IL, United States
Tel: Toll-free from U.S. & Canada: 1-800-933-2723, #2
Fax: (703) 575-5400
Website: http://www.ascd.org/
Email: annuconf@ascd.org

International Education Forum
April 3 - 6, 2006
Brisbane, Australia
Tel: +61 (0) 2 6240 5188
Fax: +61 (0) 2 6240 7196
Website: http://aei.dest.gov.au/ AEI/MIP/Activities/05Activity09.htm
Email: AEIevents@dest.gov.au

American Educational Research Association (AERA)
2006 Annual Meeting
April 8 - 12, 2006
San Francisco, CA, United States
Tel: (202) 223-9485
Fax: (202) 775-1824
Website: http://www.aera.net/

Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE)and the Ohio Association for Adult and Continuing Education (OAACE)
2006 COABE Annual Conference
April 26 - 29, 2006
Houston, TX, United States
Tel: (714) 536-7354
Website: http://www.coabe.org/

International Reading Association (IRA)
51st Annual Convention
April 30 - May 4, 2006
Chicago, IL, United States
Tel: (302) 731-1600
Fax: (302) 731-1057
Website: www.reading.org/

National Institute for People with Disabilities Network (YAI)
27th Annual International Conference
May 1 - 5, 2006
New York, NY, United States
Tel: (212) 273-6193
Fax: (212) 629-4113
Website: http://www.yai.org

Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA)
IHA's Fifth Annual Health Literacy Conference
May 4 - 6, 2006
Irvine, CA, United States
Tel: (562) 690-4001
Fax: (562) 690-8988
Website: www.iha4health.org
Email: info@iha4health.org

Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council (VALBEC)
2006 Conference
May 5, 2006
Melbourne, Australia
Tel: + 3 9546 6892
Fax: +3 9546 0421
Website: http://www.valbec.org.au
Email: conf@valbec.org.au

WAC
8th National Writing Across the Curriculum Conference
May 18 - 20, 2006
Clemson, SC, United States
Website: http://virtual.clemson.edu/ caah/pearce/wac2006
Email: wac2006-L@clemson.edu

Moffitt Cancer Center
Cancer, Culture and Literacy
May 18 – 20, 2006
Clearwater Beach, FL, United States
Website: http://www.moffitt.usf.edu/ about_moffitt/calendar/events/200605.asp
Email: Pospolck@moffitt.usf.edu

Adult Education Research Conference (AERC)
AERC 2006
May 19 - 21, 2006
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, United States
Website: http://www.edst.educ.ubc.ca/ aerc/informat.htm
Email: tom.sork@ubc.ca

2006 CADE and AMTEC Joint International Conference
May 23 – 26, 2006
Montreal, QC, Canada
Website: www.acedamtec.uqam.ca/ EN/communication

Lifelong Learning Conference
June 13 - 16, 2006
Yeppoon, QLD, Australia
Tel: +61 (0) 7 4930 6310
Fax: +61 (0) 7 4930 6436
Website: http://lifelonglearning.cqu.edu.au /2006
Email: lifelong-learning-conference@cqu.edu.au

Thirteenth International Conference on Learning
June 22 – 25, 2006
Montego Bay, Jamaica
Website: www.LearningConference.com
Email: info-L06@ commongroundconferences.com

American Library Association (ALA)
29th Annual Conference
June 22 - 28, 2006
New Orleans, LA, United States
Tel: 1-800-545-2433
Website: www.ala.org/

Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE)
ED-MEDIA 2006
June 26 - July 1, 2006
Orlando, FL, United States
Tel: (757) 623-7588
Fax: (703) 997-8760
Website: http://www.aace.org/conf/ edmedia
Email: info@aace.org

International Reading Association (IRA)
21st World Congress on Reading
August 7 - 10, 2006
Budapest, Hungary
Tel: (302) 731-1600
Fax: (302) 731-1057
Website: www.reading.org/

2006 ACAL Conference
October 6 – 7, 2006
Adelaide, Australia
Tel: + 03 9546 6892
Fax: + 03 9546 0421
Website: www.acal.edu.au/
Email: acal@pacific.net.au

The American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE)
AAACE National Conference
November 7 – 9, 2006
Milwaukee, WI, United States
Website: www.aaace.org

International Federation for the Teaching of English (IFTE)
Literacy Without Borders: Designs in Global Literacy
February 15 - 17, 2007
Vancouver, BC, Canada
Tel: (204) 977-5629
Fax: (204) 789-3929
Website: http://www.ifte.net/
Email: dradi@ifte.net

International Association for the Improvement of Mother Tongue Education (IAIMTE)
6th International Conference
March 27 - 29, 2007
Exeter, United Kingdom
Website: http://www.ilo.uva.nl/development/iaimte/

International Society for Language Studies (ISLS)
2007 Conference
April 2 – 4, 2007
Honolulu, HA, United States
Website: www.isls-inc.org/conference.htm
Email: lisa@isls-inc.org

Centre for Research in Lifelong Learning (CRLL)
4th CRLL International Conference
June 22 - 24, 2007
Stirling Scotland United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 141 273-1347
Fax: +44 (0) 141 273-1318
Website: http://crll.gcal.ac.uk
Email: crll@gcal.ac.uk

Summer Institutes

14th Annual Health Literacy Summer Institute
June 18 – 21, 2006
Portland, Maine, United States
Tel: (207) 602-2205
Website: www.healthliteracyinstitute.net
Email: sstableford@une.edu

Centre for Literacy of Quebec Summer Institute 2006 – Accountability: Restoring the Balanace
June 28- 30, 2006
Montreal, QC
Tel: (514) 931-8731 ext 1415
Fax: (514) 931-5181
Website: www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca
Email: info@centreforliteracy.qc.ca

NCTE/Whole Language Umbrella Literacies for All Summer Institute
July 13 – 15, 2006
Charlotte, NC
Tel: 1-800-369-6283
Fax: (217) 328-9645
Website: www.ncte.org
Email: public_info@ncte.org

Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) Summer Workshop, Institute and Conference
July 13-16, 2006
Chattanooga, TN
Website: http://wpacouncil.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS